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Social workers in child sex trial all admit criminal past

Three social workers accused of having sexual intercourse with a girl of 14 in council care all had criminal records, a jury was told yesterday.

Tony Graham, aged 41, who denies 11 charges, including conspiring with and inciting others to have unlawful intercourse, has admitted being sentenced to nine years for robbery.

Grant Orris, aged 25, yesterday disclosed that he had been in trouble with the police between the ages of 15 and 17 for burglary and had been placed on probation.

John Gillespie, aged 37, said that he had been in detention centres and borstal for offences of theft and assault.

The prosecution at Maidstone Crown Court has alleged that Mr Graham, of Charles Street, Strood, Kent, seduced the girl while she was in care at the family support centre at Chatham, where he was employed.

Mr Robert Fischel, for the prosecution, said that Mr Graham was well aware that the girl was of an age where she could not consent, although there was no suggestion that she was not a willing participant in what had occurred.

Mr Fischel added: "She was simply being used by Graham for the sexual gratification of himself and his friends".

Another girl has said that he had sexual intercourse with her when she was 15.

The younger girl has told the jury of a session of intercourse she had with Mr Graham and Mr Gillespie, of Silverdale Avenue, Minster, Sheppey.

She also said that Mr Graham urged Mr Orris, of Marylebone Grove, Dulwich, south London, to seduce her. The girl added that Mr Graham once looked on while five men went into a bedroom one after another to perform sexual acts with her.

All three defendants have strenuously denied the allegations.

Mr Graham, who has said that he was brought up in "the rough end" of Merseyside, has admitted having been sent to detention centres and borstal and been "right through the system from start to finish".

He said that he had decided to make a fresh start the day before he received the nine-year sentence.

Mr Graham told the jury: "On the day before I was due to be sentenced for the robbery one of my co-defendants committed suicide in an adjoining cell."

"I realized there and then it was a tragic waste of his life and that all the things that had brought him to this applied to me."

"I was determined to change things and spend all my time in prison doing courses and examinations."

"On my release I was offered the job of social

worker and was told the type of life I had led was identical to that being led by the kids I was being asked to look after and that it would be certainly helpful to them if I could use my experiences of life to stop them making the same mistakes."

He applied to Kent County Council for a job as a car mechanic but after long interviews, in which he disclosed full details of his past, he said he was offered the job as a social worker because it was thought his experiences would enable him to understand the problems of delinquent children.

In evidence yesterday he said the girl's stories were "total fabrication". Mr Graham added: "Anyone who works as I did with young girls in care is in danger of being in my position".

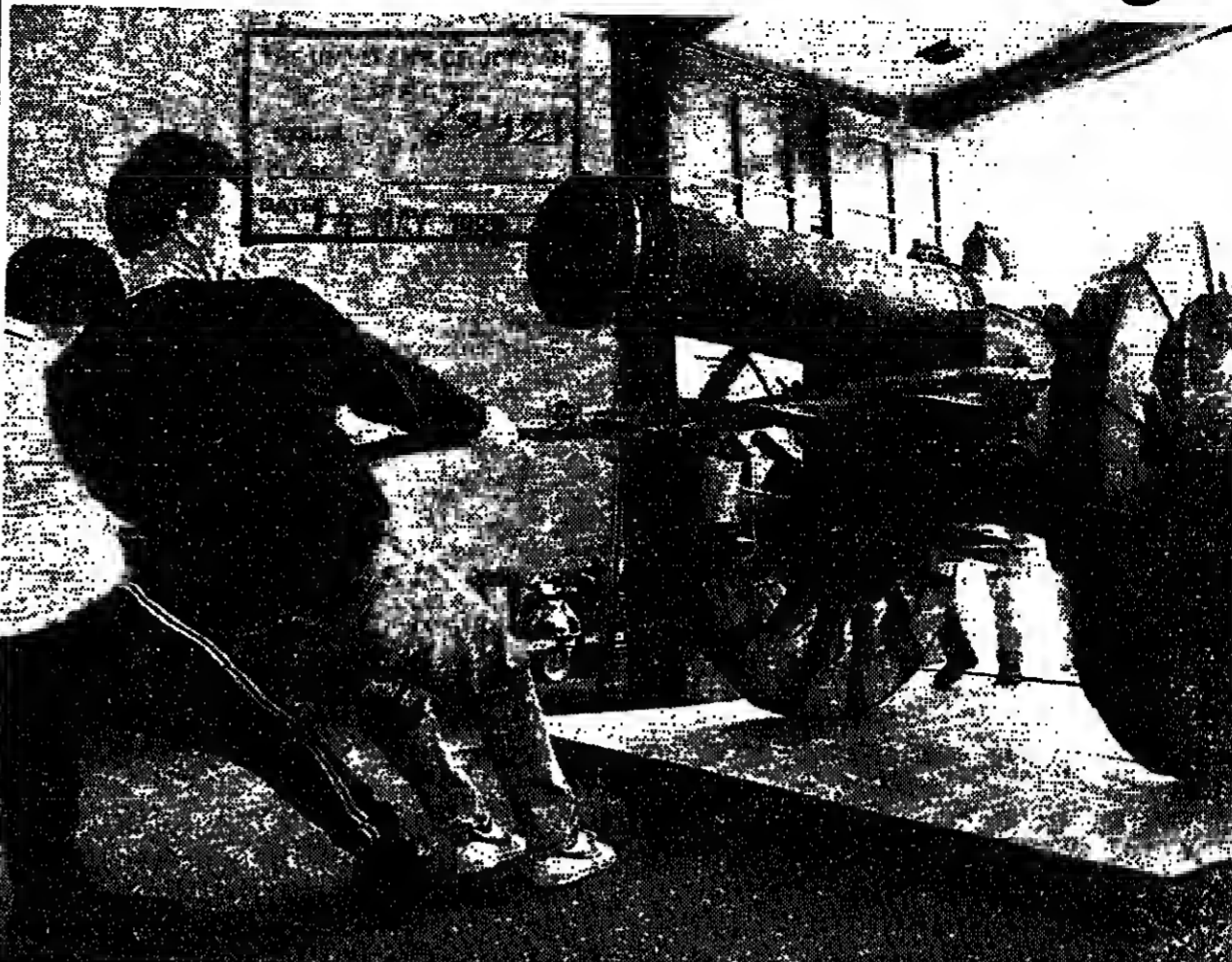
Mr Orris and Mr Gillespie have also described the girls' stories as fabrication.

Miss Alison Vale, a social worker with whom Mr Graham was living at the time of the alleged offences and the mother of their two-year-old child, said he was "a great charmer".

Miss Vale told the jury she left Mr Graham because she could not trust him after he had admitted to her that he was having an affair with another social worker at the centre where he worked.

The trial was adjourned until Tuesday.

Armada cannon reaches target



A five-ton bronze siege gun of 1556 from the wreck of the Spanish Armada transport ship, Trinidad Valencera, which would have been used to batter the walls of London, being hoisted into the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, south London, yesterday to be part of the 1588-1988 Armada exhibition, which opens on April 20 (Photograph: Deniz McNeelance).

Post Office still failing on efficiency

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor
The Post Office is still failing to meet delivery targets or achieve improvements in service suggested by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, the House of Commons was told yesterday.

Mr Kenneth Clarke, Minister for Trade and Industry, said there were eight recommendations made by the commission which the Post Office had failed fully to implement.

He said the commission could not decide whether the Post Office monopoly was in the public interest until those recommendations had been followed.

Mr Clarke gave a warning that some of the 1,500 crown post offices might be closed or become private sub post offices after the commission reports on the efficiency of counter services.

However, he said he recognized that the Post Office was anxious to develop its counter trade by offering financial services like those of building societies and insurance companies.

Mr Clarke acknowledged that significant progress had been made since the commission reported, especially in the introduction of mechanization and improved working methods.

Among the commission recommendations which the Post Office is trying to meet is the establishment of standard times and costs for letter post and a productivity scheme based on them.

Other recommendations still not met included the introduction of a computerized system for manpower statistics, the computerization of an airmail bags records system and replacement of sorting machines for the foreign mail section. It was disappointing, Mr Clarke said, that the introduction of the new systems and machinery needed had been so long delayed.

Motorway speeding

400 trapped in video blitz

By Rodney Cowton and David Cross

Four hundred drivers have been caught by speed detectors exceeding the 50 mph limit on a contraflow along the M6 and M61 which police describe as one of Britain's most dangerous stretches of motorway.

And on the A1 in Cambridgeshire, more than 600 drivers made illegal U-turns in a 12-hour period, a video survey has found.

Most speed limits at contraflows on motorways are only advisory, but 50mph mandatory limits are increasingly being used.

It is expected that Mr Paul Channon, Secretary of State for Transport, will next week announce that a mandatory limit is to be imposed on all contraflows.

On the three-mile contraflow with a mandatory limit near Preston, Lancashire, police have adopted an unprecedentedly tough policy since the beginning of March.

Police said that 78 vehicles had been stopped, and the drivers were expected to

appear before magistrates on April 25.

A further 330 had been observed, but not stopped, breaking the limit by police using speed detectors and sometimes unmarked cars.

Many of the 330 would not have been aware that they had been detected, until they received notices at their homes telling them.

Fifty-four people have died in two-and-a-half years on a 40-mile stretch of the M6 and M61, in which the contraflow is located.

Mr Brian Johnson, Chief Constable of Lancashire, started his campaign about three weeks ago when surveys found that up to 84 per cent of drivers were ignoring the 50 mph limit, some of them doing 80 mph.

In the area immediately after the contraflow, where the speed restriction still applied, virtually all drivers had exceeded the limit.

Police said that although the contraflow was equipped with television monitors they had

not been used for enforcing the speed limit.

In the Cambridgeshire survey a video, made by the county council to persuade the Department of Transport to make a 20-mile section on the A1 safer for local traffic, shows that many drivers are turning the wrong way down the fast lane to get to their turning and most are exceeding the 70 mph speed limit most of the time.

"Illegal U-turns are stupid and made even more dangerous by the speed at which vehicles are travelling", Mr Adrian Cumber, founder and organizer of the A1 Action Committee, said yesterday.

"Forty foot long articulated lorries are using the gaps to turn round, blocking the fast lanes of both carriageways. That can, and has been, fatal".

During the past three years an estimated 30 people have been killed in nearly 500 accidents along that section of the A1 north of Huntingdon.

Most of the accidents have taken place at the 130 central reservation crossing points.

Check on pop music air time

By Robin Oakley
Political Editor

The Government yesterday came to the aid of pop music lovers who believe that their favourite records are not played often enough on independent radio stations.

The stations have been complaining about the level of royalties charged by the record industry for records played over the air and about the restrictions placed on playing time as a condition for allowing the records to be broadcast.

Yesterday Lord Young of Graffham, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, announced that certain practices in the collective licensing of public performance and broadcasting rights were therefore being referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The commission will report on whether it is in the public interest for the record companies, as owners of copyright, to assign their public performance and broadcast rights to a collective licensing body and for those bodies to restrict the number of broadcasts. It will also rule on royalties.

Hurd adviser for satellite TV group

By Richard Evans, Media Editor

A special adviser to Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, is leaving the Home Office next month to join British Satellite Broadcasting, which is launching four national television services next year.

Mr Edward Bickham, aged 31, will be head of external affairs with the direct broadcast satellite venture. He will be responsible for regulatory and policy matters at national and European level.

Mr Bickham has advised Mr Hurd on all Home Office policies including, until recently, broadcasting.

He worked for Mr James Prior, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, from 1983 and became special adviser to Mr Hurd when he took over the portfolio and subsequently followed him to the Home Office.

Ministerial special advisers do not have access to information about individual companies or any influence on the letting of contracts. They do not need the clearance required by senior Civil Servants who join a company operating in the same sphere as their former Whitehall duties.

Mr Anthony Simmonds-Goo-

ding, chief executive of BSB, said yesterday Mr Bickham would have a key role in the company's relationship with Whitehall, the Independent Broadcasting Authority and Europe. "Some months ago, I realized we were not putting enough time and effort into government matters because people were working so hard here on other matters including recruiting staff, getting the programming right and talking to micro-chip manufacturers", he said.

BSB has been under pressure from some investors to lobby government departments to make sure the pace of change in broadcasting is not so rapid as to threaten the satellite venture's survival.

A subscription film channel is expected to underpin BSB financially in its formative years. The company does not want the Government to give the go-ahead for a fifth satellite channel to be funded by subscription rather than advertising.

Mr Bickham will also act as a special assistant to the chief executive, ensuring that decisions on programming, marketing, finance and operations are carried out.

Move to get the timing right

By Sheila Ginn, Political Staff

Britain will face darker mornings and lighter evenings under a proposed shift in summer time being considered by Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary.

He announced three options yesterday for determining where to set the clocks with the hope that at least one can satisfy the majority of the public, industry and the EEC.

However, he hinted that the strongest demand is coming from those who want lighter evenings. Such a system was adopted during the Second

World War. It was tried again between 1968 and 1971 but discontinued because of opposition to dark, winter mornings.

He is under pressure to make a decision before 1990 so that clocks can be harmonized throughout the EEC.

In his consultation paper published yesterday he suggests either:

• Ending summer time in late September, in line with the EEC, instead of in late October.

• Putting the clocks forward

one hour in the winter and two hours in the summer to bring in an even longer period of evening daylight.

• Keeping the present system of Greenwich Mean Time in the winter and putting the clocks forward one hour in the summer months.

Mr Hurd said: "After this consultation process has been completed, the Government will canvass public and parliamentary opinion."

The Home Office is calling for representations by June 30.

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The Royal College of Nursing wishes you a happy April Fool's Day. But this is no joke. The NHS really needs this much money. WE CARE FOR NURSES, SO THEY CAN CARE FOR YOU.



Whitehall... Air fares cut by BA to combat 'dumping'... fe... MAYFAIR ET GALLERY... NG DOWN... FEW WEEKS...

Portfolio PLUS NEW Accumulator Spanish holiday surprise A pensioner on holiday in Spain and a housewife share the daily Portfolio prize of £4,000. Mrs Margaret Nosek, of Taplow, Buckinghamshire, will be told of her win on holiday by family friends who say she has played the competition since it started and has been a life-long reader of The Times. Also enjoying a £2,000 windfall is Mrs Brenda Eastham, of The Close, Claverton Village, Bath, Avon, who said she would use some of the money to buy a new car and the rest to visit her two daughters, one studying at Leeds University and the other a veterinary surgeon in the Orkney Islands.

Rates money keeps lord's home in style Thousands of pounds of rate-payers cash is being used to cut the lawn around Lord Methuen's Wiltshire estate because of legal red tape. The Elizabethan mansion and gardens are kept spic and span with money which would otherwise be spent on education. County council officials have admitted he is legally entitled to £120,000 a year for the next 78 years under an agreement when Corsham Court, near Chippenham, Wiltshire, was taken over for an art college, now moved to Mr Don Foster, council education committee chairman, said yesterday that Lord Methuen had indicated he would want a million to break the lease.

Medical experts to check on health workers with Aids

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

An independent panel of medical experts is to be set up urgently to advise doctors and health workers infected with the Aids virus on whether they can continue to treat patients, the Department of Health said yesterday.

The move is recommended by the Government's Expert Advisory Group on Aids (EAGA) in its report published yesterday.

The report emphasizes that no transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) from a doctor, nurse or other health professional to a patient has been reported anywhere in the world.

It says that provided normal precautions are followed, most clinical procedures pose no risk of HIV transmission to a patient.

But it concedes that there is "an extremely small theoretical risk" of transmitting the virus if infected surgeons, or others assisting in operations, injure themselves in such a way that their blood contaminates the blood of patients.

The report makes it clear that any member of a surgical team with Aids or HIV infection would almost certainly be

required to stop taking part in invasive operations.

A very few doctors and other NHS staff are believed to have been infected with HIV, and one British consultant kidney specialist is known to have died of Aids last year.

Publicity about that death led to an intense debate within the medical and nursing professions about the responsibility of infected personnel to give up or alter their work to safeguard their patients.

The department said last November that all doctors who believed themselves to be infected had a duty to seek expert advice, and if necessary, to give up work. That view has been supported by the General Medical Council and the British Medical Association.

The expert advisory group emphasized that obligation yesterday. "Health care workers who consider that they have been infected with HIV should seek immediate counselling and, if appropriate, diagnostic HIV antibody testing", its report said.

"If found to be infected, and if their duties involve performing, or assisting in,

surgical procedures, they must also seek and act upon occupational advice on any modifications or limitations to their duties which may be necessary for the protection of patients."

In addition, health care staff with HIV or Aids should remain under regular medical supervision to ensure the early detection of symptoms, including mental instability, the report recommends.

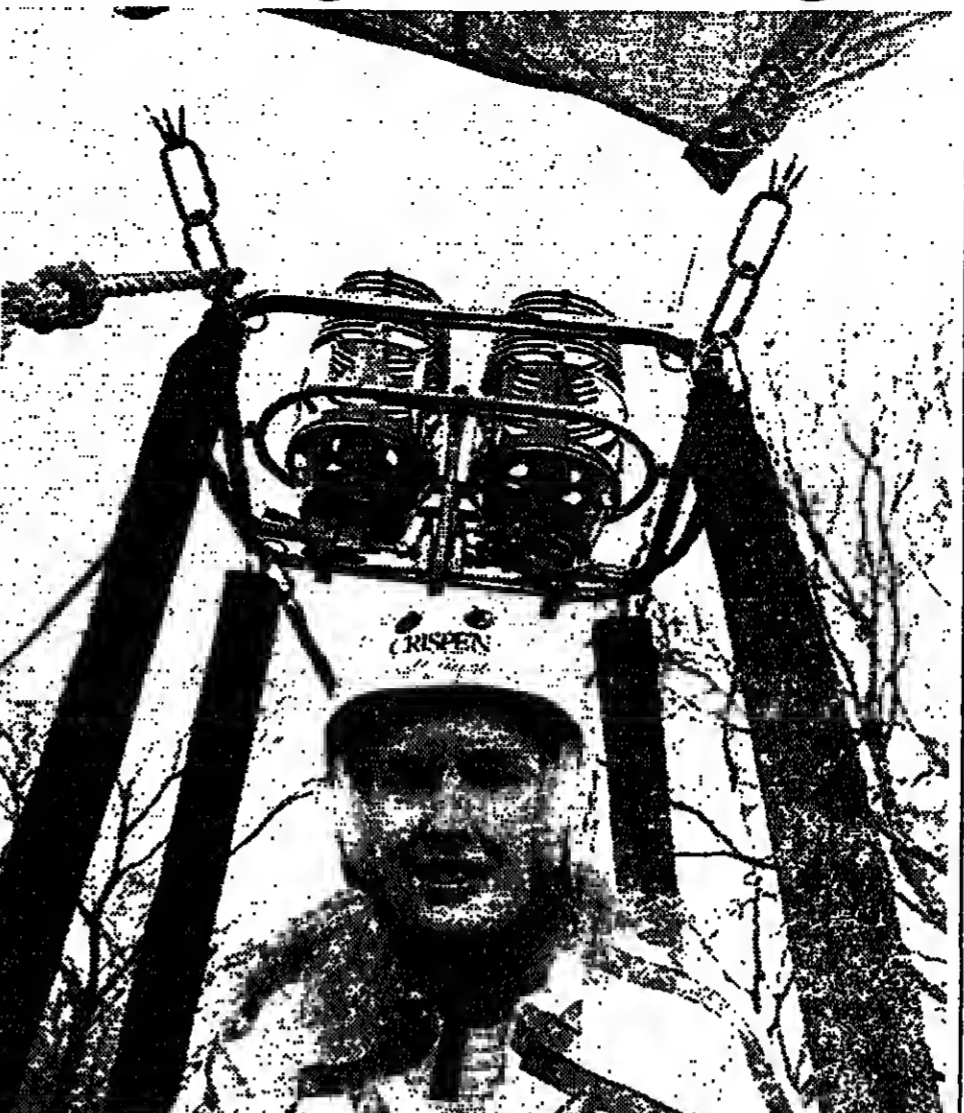
In last year's controversial case, the consultant with Aids accepted the expert advisory group's advice and stopped work with patients in a renal unit. His patients were monitored for traces of HIV infection, but none was found.

In the view of the Government's chief medical officer, Sir Donald Acheson, the policy of encouraging infected doctors to come forward "had exactly the desired effect".

The report notes that no country has suggested a general ban on HIV-infected doctors taking part in operations, or advocated specific restrictions on the employment of any group of health staff.

Copies of Aids: HIV-Infected Health Care Workers have been sent to all health authorities and professional organizations.

Heading for the heights



Dani Bridge of Nottingham in the balloon in which she hopes to beat the UK altitude record next week. Miss Bridge, whose mother died of cancer, will fly in aid of cancer research. She already holds the British women's altitude record (Photograph: Peter Trivnor).

Tories expect nurses' rise to be paid in full

By Martin Fletcher, Political Reporter

A growing number of Tory MPs expect the Cabinet to accept and fund fully the recommendations of the nurses' pay review body.

Senior MPs have been convinced by contacts with ministers in the past week that the recommendations will be implemented. They were predicting that there could be rises of up to 20 per cent for the most skilled grades.

An influential group of more than 20 Conservative MPs has added to the pressure on the Government by tabling a Commons motion praising the devotion of the Royal College of Nursing for the recent endorsement of its no-strike policy.

The motion calls on the Government "to implement any pay award recommended by the independent review body and to fund it in full".

Mr Michael Latham, MP for Rutland and Melton and sponsor of the motion, said yesterday that there was "a very solid caucus of well-established and long-serving members who expect the Government to act sensibly and generously towards the health service".

The economy was in excellent shape. There was little point in having an indepen-

dent review body if its recommendations were ignored. "Many senior Tory MPs regard the way the Government treats the recommendations as a touchstone of its future attitude to the NHS."

The recommendations are expected to land on the Prime Minister's desk within the next few days and there is intense pressure on the Government to take quick action.

Pay accounts for 75 per cent of the expenditure of local health authorities. There is wide cross-party agreement that they cannot adequately plan for the financial year ahead without knowing what to allocate for staff costs.

In recent years the Government has failed to fund awards in full and the all-party social services committee has calculated total underfunding since 1981 to be £1.8 billion - a figure disputed by ministers.

Mr John Major, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, has already told the Commons that it future decisions on public sector pay would be taken before the beginning of the new financial year.

He has also warned health authority managers that cuts in services in the coming year cannot be justified.

Debate wanted on 'lost' papers

Over the years, the House of Commons has been called upon to debate on a number of occasions the loss of important documents. The House of Commons has been called upon to debate on a number of occasions the loss of important documents. The House of Commons has been called upon to debate on a number of occasions the loss of important documents.

Shipping Bill passed

The House of Commons has passed an amendment to the Merchant Shipping Bill to restrict the number of British ships in the world fleet. The amendment was passed by a majority of 100 votes.

Light aircraft accidents

The number of fatal accidents involving light aircraft has risen in the last year. The Civil Aviation Authority has reported a 25 per cent increase in fatal accidents involving light aircraft.

Standard for equipment

The British Standards Institution is preparing a new standard for children's equipment. The standard will cover a wide range of children's toys and equipment.

Impensimism

There has been a rise in impensimism in the North. Impensimism is a condition characterized by a lack of concern for the welfare of others.

Owen

£1,400 while the wife has no income. The couple are struggling to make ends meet. The wife is unable to find work.

Pilots to face tough new tests

Private pilots are to face tougher tests of their flying skills in an attempt to stem growing numbers of air deaths.

Mr Peter Bottomley, Under Secretary of State at the Department of Transport, told the Commons that an investigation by the Civil Aviation Authority had decided that more positive and formal tests of skill were needed.

Mr Bottomley said that in 1987 private fixed-wing plane accidents resulted in 25 deaths, compared with between 13 and 20 for the years 1981 to 1986.

Waste storage

Cumbria County Council are recommending Copeland Borough Council to reject an application by British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL) to extend the time for storage of spent nuclear fuel from overseas at Sellafield. BNFL has requested the removal of the December 1990 to December 1995 time limit.

Alpine cure

Asthmatic children from England are to undergo high altitude treatment in the French Alps. The European Society for Climatotherapy will accept some English children aged between seven and 15 for three-month courses of treatment near Grenoble.

Abortion file

Police investigating the case of a baby girl, who lived for more than two hours after being aborted at 21 weeks at the City General Hospital in Carlisle last July, have sent a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Diaries trial

Jacqui Bell, aged 19, of Ealing, west London, was committed for trial yesterday by Ealing magistrates. She is accused of stealing diaries and a tape from Miss Fiona Wright, a former girl friend of Sir Ralph Halpern, chairman of Burton.

Steptoe choice

Mr Patrick Taylor, a Canadian gynaecologist, has been invited to take over as medical director at the Bourn Hall test tube baby clinic in Cambridgeshire after the death of Mr Patrick Steptoe.

Factory closes

Berger, the paint manufacturer, announced yesterday the closure of its Bristol factory with the loss of 200 jobs.

Mr Yuk replaces the skull and crossbones

The skull and crossbones, for centuries the warning symbol for poison, is to be replaced on medicine bottles by a bright green logo called Mr Yuk.

Research showed that children are not scared of the old symbol any more, so Mr Yuk is being used in a new campaign to stop children accidentally poisoning themselves.

Safety watchdogs alarmed at the increase in the number of children swallowing harmful substances have copied the idea, which is to be introduced first in Liverpool, from the United States.

BR beats cash cuts deadline

By Rodney Cowton, Transport Correspondent

A reduction in British Rail's subsidy, condemned as too harsh by a passenger group, has been achieved a year ahead of schedule.

In 1986 the Department of Transport told the railways to manage on a subsidy of £555 million a year by 1989-90, a cut of 25 per cent. Allowing for inflation, it is equivalent to more than £600 million.

It was announced yesterday that the subsidy would be £605 million in the 1988-89 financial year, starting today.

British Rail said that meant it expected to reach the Government's target a year early. Receipts had been coming in at a higher level, and costs coming down at a higher rate than had been forecast in 1986. A prime factor was the general improvement in the economy.

However, the Central Transport Consultative Committee, which represents passengers, expressed fears that service could be affected.

The three-year target set in 1986 had been extremely tough and "we would be doubly concerned at any further tightening of the financial constraints". Improvements in service would be delayed, it said.

The Department of Transport said the achievement of the target was a "welcome consequence of British Rail's success in attracting more passengers and consequently in receiving greater income than was forecast when the three-year target was set".

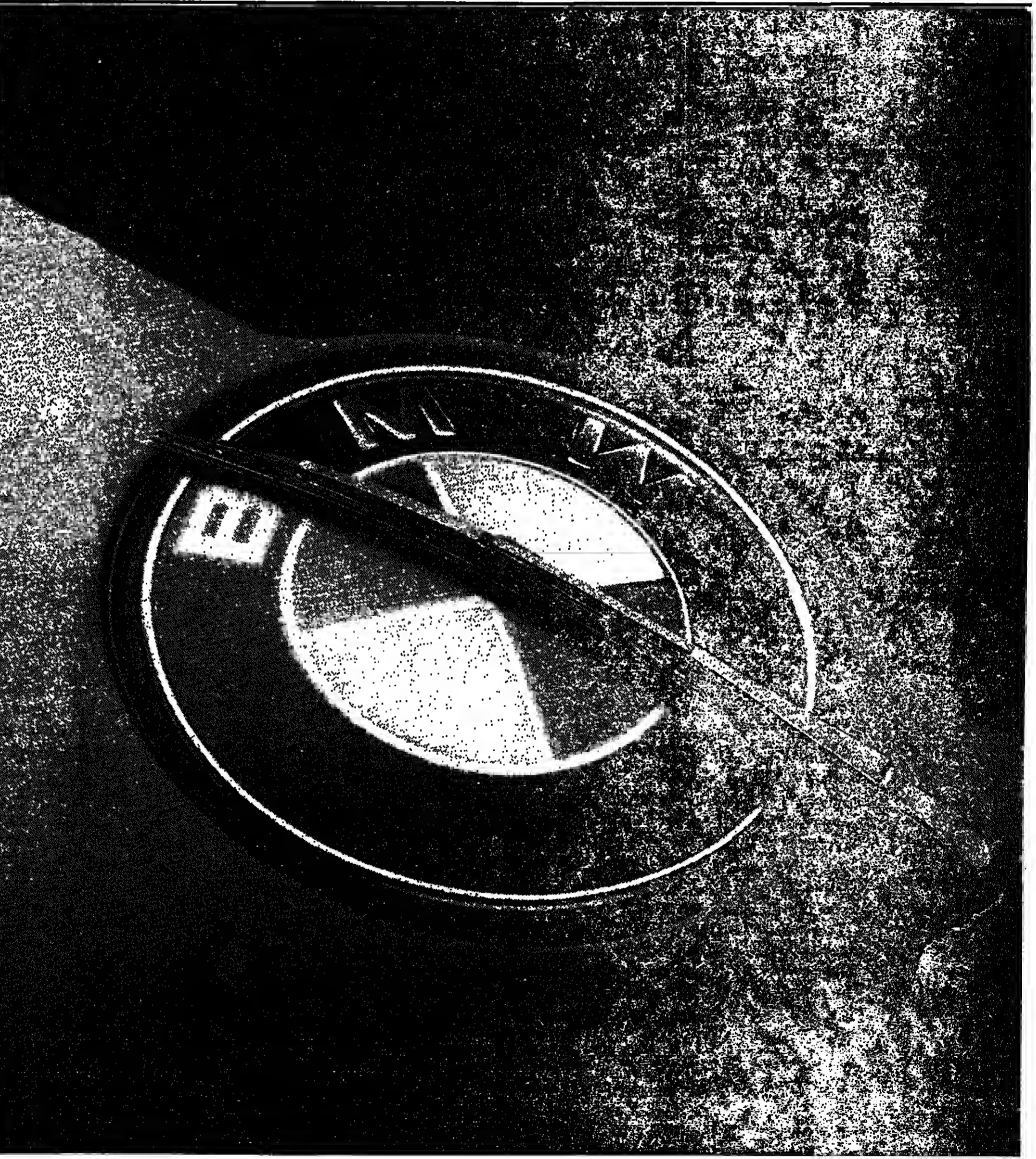
The figure of £605 million "makes full provision for worthwhile investment to improve quality of service and improve efficiency".

The 25 per cent cut followed a similar reduction between 1983 and 1986.

For the first time, from today the long distance InterCity services will receive no public subsidy, and are expected to turn a loss of about £100 million in 1987-88 into a £17 million profit within two years.

British Rail receives grants only for the provincial passenger trains, excluding InterCity, and Network SouthEast.

British Rail said that over the past three years commuter traffic into London had risen by 15 per cent, and InterCity's revenue was up by 12 per cent in the past year.



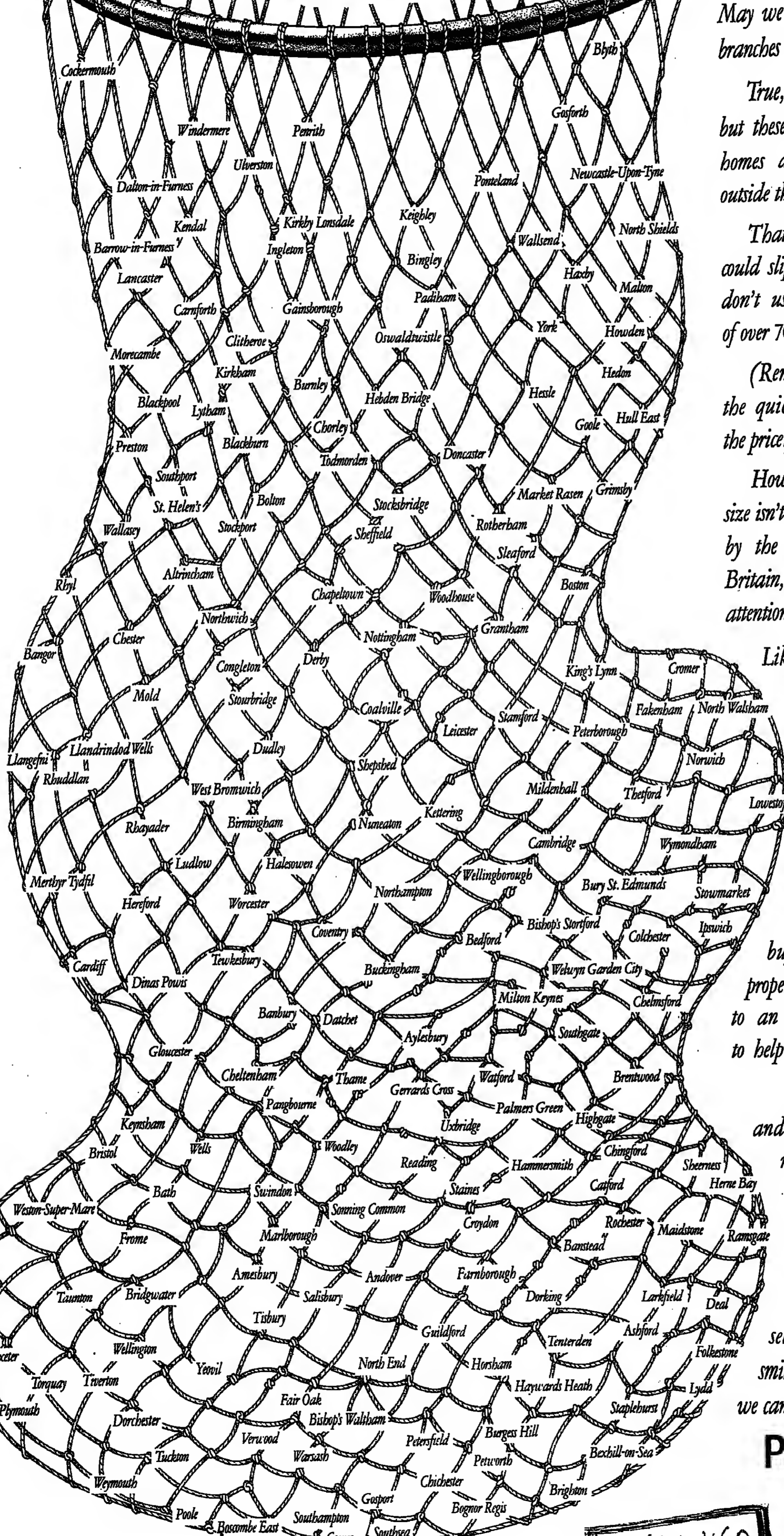
NOW THE BMW MARQUE WILL NEVER BE MARKED.

It has been said that when a person invests in a BMW, they're really paying for a name. It's a charge that BMW have long learned to live with. After all, BMW is a name that reflects the very highest standards of construction and the very pinnacle of technical excellence. Sadly, layers of grime and dirt combine to leave it a name reflecting little else. Nowhere more so than on the enamel bonnet badge. So in a bid to keep their nose clean, BMW have developed the Badgewash system. Available as standard on the new 750iL (and as an option on all other models) it features technology never seen on a car before. A tiny sensor mounted in the wiper arm

measures the light reflected back from the white sections of the BMW badge. Even if a film of dirt cuts out as little as 5% of that light, the sensor will detect it and start the wiper. The system is closely linked to the acclaimed Motronic engine management system. It means the wipe pressure can actually change depending on the car's speed. The jet washer boasts equally futuristic technology. An ion exchange system softens the water before it's sprayed onto the badge. (Hard water would of course scratch the enamel surface.) A fine system, you'll agree. But it's only the tip of the iceberg. BMW are refining a boot Badgewash at their German Research and Development complex.

Plans are in the pipeline for a wheel Badgewash utilising pressure from the brake pipe. There's even talk of an anti-static steering wheel badge for dustier climates. Clearly, BMW will go to extraordinary lengths to clear their name. Send to: One Beenhad, BMW Information Service, PO Box 46, Hounslow, Middlesex TW4 6NF. Please send me more details of the BMW. Badgewash Bootwash Wheelwash Hogwash Name: _____ T/A/F/I Address: _____ Postcode: _____ THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE

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Docklands' anger over jobs that go to outsiders

By John Spicer, Employment Affairs Correspondent

People living in east London say dockland construction firms are asking them to accommodate workers being brought in from as far away as Ireland, while the unemployed in their own boroughs are not being given jobs.

Some firms have been calling on residents asking if they have rooms to let for outsiders while local unemployment stands at around 17 per cent.

The problem has been highlighted by Mr Barry Sheerman, Labour's spokesman on employment, who has written to Mr Norman Fowler, the Secretary of State for Employment, complaining that bricklayers are being recruited in Ireland and brought to docklands with offers of £600 a week wages.

However the Building Employers Confederation (BEC), which represents companies responsible for 75 per cent of all building work in the private sector, said every effort is being made to recruit locally and the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) is planning a big training centre in the docks specifically aimed at local workers.

East London officials of the Manpower Services Commission, however, say it is difficult for the unemployed in the area to get jobs on building sites.

One explained: "Much of the work is done by subcontractors, who arrive with their own staff already recruited. It is obvious that if they win a contract they will not come to the site, then start recruiting."

"Secondly, many skilled people in the construction industry are self-employed and act on a freelance basis. As a result of all this, even if people arrive at our job centres willing to do labouring jobs, we can only tell them to try their luck on the sites. Not many are successful."

Mr Peter Shapcott, the confederation's London region director, said most of the jobs on building sites required skills and because of the pressure of work, particularly in London, firms were having to look to the provinces and Ireland, which had a tradition of supplying labour.

He said: "This pressure is going to be maintained until the end of the 1990s and a great effort is being made to provide training facilities locally. This has many advantages, not the least being the easing of the accommodation problem." Mr Shapcott said that over the next few years recruiting for the building industry would get worse as the school population fell and fewer young people came forward. He said construction firms were adopting schools and taking pupils to look at building sites in the hope of interesting them in learning building skills.

Already, more than 21,500 young people take up construction courses through Youth Training Scheme (YTS) each year, with between 50 and 60 per cent of them going on to qualify in the areas where skills are most needed such as bricklaying, plastering and carpentry.

Normal apprenticeships last three years, but a YTS trainee does one year on a course and two and a half years on-site training. The CITB also runs adult-entry training courses.

Some bricklayers are now earning as much as £600 a week on the prestige building sites through high productivity and long hours. But yesterday, Mr Jack Newby, director general of the confederation, wrote to Mr Fowler denying Mr Sheerman's assertion that his organization was sending recruiting teams to Ireland to find bricklayers.

He wrote: "Our member companies are invariably willing to recruit properly trained local operatives where these are available and the BEC, MSC and CITB are already developing a number of measures to provide further training opportunities for local people in docklands."

Officials of the Eurotunnel consortium Trans-Manche Link (TML) have sent a recruiting team to Cairo, Hong Kong and Europe to find skilled workers. They need 4,000 manual workers and applications for these jobs already number 40,000. Personnel staff are interviewing between 600 and 800 men a month.

Explorer mulls over lessons of failure

By Ronald Faux

Sir Ranulph Fiennes returned from the Arctic yesterday undeterred and unabashed that his expedition had covered less than one of the seven degrees of latitude separating him from the North Pole.

At Polar Point in London, a short row of dots on a map marked the final resting place of the Great British Polar Quest, but no one was critical. At best, trailing to the North Pole dragging 400lb on a sledge trembles on the margins of human capability.

Admiral Picie, Sir Ranulph pointed out, had taken 25 years before he could claim to have reached the Pole. He had been trying for only four years and the timetable was already prepared for another attempt next year.

What lessons had been learnt? Well, there was the question of outriggers to stabilize the sledges when they were used as canoes to cross water. And perhaps a two-man team would have more chance logistically than three people trying to make a self-sustained attempt to cover the 425 miles to the Pole.

Anything else, anything bizarre? Yes, Sir Ranulph said, they could do with fewer scientific experiments.

Dr Mike Stroud, a kidney specialist, had been interested to measure the amounts of water the human body produced at times of extreme stress and temperature. This had involved producing a sample in a bottle and as they were required to drink seven pints of water a day, stops were frequent. "The result was that I got inconveniently frost nipped."

More staff to tackle delays on passports

By John Wiander

The Home Office is taking special measures to meet an expected heavy demand for passports this summer. Already this year the demand for new and changed passports is 25 per cent up on the same period in 1987 and more staff are to be recruited at all passport offices.

Mr Timothy Renton, Minister of State at the Home Office, said in the Commons yesterday that overtime is also to be worked at weekends and personal callers will be granted an immediate free short-term extension of an expired passport.

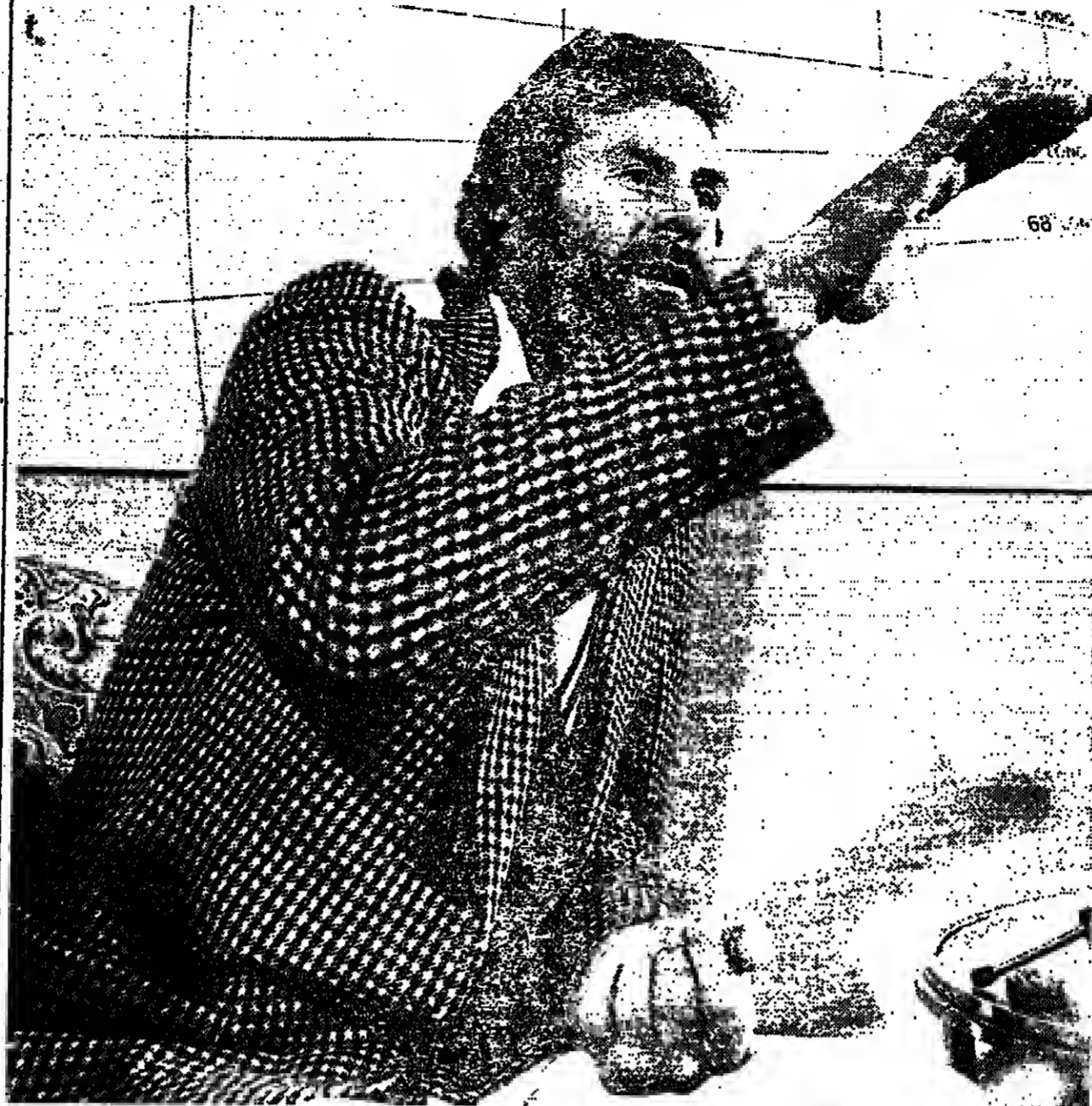
When a person has posted an application which cannot be traced, emergency travel documents will be issued to a personal caller.

Governments of countries to which Britons most frequently travel have been asked if they will accept uncancelled passports not more than five years out of date.

The Government is also trying to get the cheaper one-year visitor's passport accepted in more countries. These should soon be available at Post Offices six days a week instead of five.

Already, the United States, Israel, The Netherlands, Hong Kong and Antigua and Barbuda have agreed to accept both out-of-date and visitors' passports.

Computerization will begin at the Glasgow office in July and work will be dispersed there as soon as possible.



Sir Ranulph Fiennes outlining some of the difficulties on his polar journey, at yesterday's press conference.

WE PUT A GLOSS ON YOUR HOME - NOT ON OUR PRICES

Weekend food prices

New season lamb is of top quality

The kind weather has helped to bring good supplies of new season lamb to market in time for Easter and the quality is superb.

Prices vary considerably in different areas, but the Meat and Livestock Commission says about £2.60 a lb is a fair price for a whole leg. Whole shoulder is about £1 a lb less.

This season lamb legs are about £1.79 a lb and shoulder an average £1.04 a lb. New Zealand lamb legs range from £1.30 to £1.59 a lb.

If beef is your choice there are some good offers available on topside and silverside. The average price of fillet steak is up by 5p a lb in the South-east and boned and rolled sirloin is about £3.04 a lb. Rib roast is about £1.59 a lb.

Pork prices are unchanged since last week. Whole leg costs an average £1.08 a lb and boneless shoulder £1.26 a lb. There are plenty of 5lb to 7lb chickens.

Some fresh fish prices have increased because of seasonal demand but quality and supplies are good. Herring and mackerel are cheaper, down 2p a lb to an average 84p and 69p respectively. Cod cutlets are about £2 a lb and fillets £2.30 a lb.

Haddock fillets are £1.50 and £3.00 a lb and grey mullet is the best buy at about £1.45 a lb.

Dover Sole in some areas is as little as £2.20 a lb but could be as much as £6 a lb elsewhere. South coast plaice is of particularly good quality selling at £2.60 for fillets and £1.40 for a whole fish.

Among the selection of exotic fish at Billingsgate this week were pomfret at £3.45 a lb, barracuda £4 a lb, snapper

£2.90 a lb, and tuna about £5 a lb. St Peter's fish (Tilapia) is about £2.45 a lb and bass £5.50 a lb.

Freshwater fish in good supply includes farmed salmon steaks between £3.90 and £4.80 depending on size. Wild salmon is about £7 a lb and trout £2.20 a lb.

Round lettuce is plentiful. Savoy cabbages and Brussels sprouts are nearing the end of their season but should be available for Easter. Two favourites, iceberg lettuce at 80p to £1.10 each, and broccoli at 80p to £1.15 a lb, are more expensive this week. Cauliflowers at 50p to 70p a head are excellent quality.

Other good vegetable buys are mushrooms at 40p to 75p a half pound, courgette at 55p to 75p a lb, cabbages 17p to 30p a lb and potatoes at 11p to 15p a lb.

Fruit available include apples, pears and red, yellow and black plums between 60p and 80p a lb. Black, white and flame grapes are 60p to £1.30 a lb. Oranges are 6p to 25p each.

Good offers at supermarkets are Tesco, fresh whole turkeys at 98p a lb, fresh home produced lamb leg at £1.69 a lb, and whole scotch salmon at £2.99 a lb. Asda topside and silverside of beef are £1.89 a lb.

Sainsbury's leg or pork quarter cut is 98p a lb, grade A frozen turkeys 48p a lb, and pork loin chops £1.18 a lb. Bejam loin turkeys are 48p a lb and 2½lb turkey breast roast is £3.99 each. Dewhurst fresh-style frozen turkeys are from £4.49 each, whole New Zealand lamb at 59p a lb, Safeway topside and silverside at £1.98 a lb, and whole smoked bacon collar £1.52 a lb.

Huge tuna sets record

A deep sea fisherman, Kevin McHugh, caught a huge tuna which fetched a record £2,000 at Dublin market yesterday. The 70-lb fish - 10ft long with a 12ft girth - was netted from 1,200ft, 30 miles west of Ireland's Blasket Islands by Mr McHugh's £10 million trawler, Veronica.

The tuna was landed at Killybegs and driven 190 miles overnight to Dublin, where it was snapped up by a supermarket chain and cut up

within hours into fresh steaks for sale.

Auctioneers said it was the biggest fish sold in Ireland. Mr McHugh, aged 41, said: "They've seen a lot of fish of all types and sizes in this port. But they cheered us when we came ashore with this one."

He added that it was unusual for tuna to be caught in European waters at this time of year. "It must have been a stray which came up in the Gulf Stream."

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WORLD ROUNDUP

Pentagon denies plan to cut SDI

Washington - The Pentagon is insisting that there will be no backing off, phasing down, or anything else...

An article in The Washington Post last Sunday had said the Pentagon's immediate goal was to develop a system to protect vital US military installations from Soviet attack...

Cypriot Jet crash kills two

Dr George Vassiliou, the new President of Cyprus, said in London yesterday that he would like to see the British military bases on the island withdrawn...

Bonn - An American F16 jet fighter on a formation training flight crashed on Forst, near Karlsruhe, yesterday, killing the pilot and a man in one of three houses destroyed by a fire...

But he used talks with Mrs Thatcher to press for a more active British interest in resolving the 14-year split between the Greek and Turkish halves of the island.

The accident came two days after a French fighter crashed in a wood near three nuclear power plants in Bavaria. Police said that the site of yesterday's crash was nine miles from the nearest nuclear power plant.

Mulroney's changes

Ottawa (AFP) - The Canadian Prime Minister, Mr Brian Mulroney, yesterday carried out a big Cabinet reshuffle, naming his Ambassador to France, Mr Lucien Bouchard, as the new Secretary of State.

Mr John Crosbie, the Transport Minister and an advocate of free trade with the US, is replaced by the Employment and Immigration Minister, Mr Benoit Bouchard.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Don Mazankowski, who had been in charge of the Treasury Board, has been put in charge of the Ministry of State for Privatization, replacing Ms Barbara McDougall, who takes over the employment and immigration portfolio from Mr Gerry Weiner.

Quest for acceptance by Democratic elders Jackson woos power-brokers

From Michael Binyon Washington

The Rev Jesse Jackson, moving adroitly to consolidate his position as a leading contender for the Democratic presidential nomination, was in Wisconsin yesterday campaigning with the unofficial blessing of many of the party elders.

He invited some of the most respected Democratic power-brokers to a get-acquainted breakfast on Wednesday and strongly impressed them.

The old wineskins are expanding and making room for new wine," he said afterwards. Mr Clark Clifford, the former Defence Secretary who has advised eight presidents, called it an "extraordinary event".

With both men running neck-and-neck the primary is seen as a vital precursor to the huge New York race, which, with 255 delegates, is likely to be decisive in establishing a front-runner.

The meeting was organized by Mr Bert Lance, President Carter's former budget director, who has become a leading adviser to Mr Jackson.

Sipping coffee in an elegant Washington hotel with 30 of the Democrats' inner circle, he attempted to allay the panic his rise has caused in the party, outlining his policies, and giving the group a chance to question him.



Mr Jackson discussing policy with his campaign manager, Mr Gerald Austin, as they travelled to Milwaukee for the Wisconsin primary. They want to use the state as a springboard to build support for their critical battle in New York.

Tuesday, may be fertile ground for Mr Jackson. With a liberal tradition, whites may support Mr Jackson's left-wing positions in large numbers. The state is also suffering from an economic downturn and Mr Jackson has closely identified himself with struggling farmers and unemployed industrial workers.

He needs a convincing show of support to bolster him for the New York primary the following week where he faces stiff opposition, especially from Jewish voters. Already the battle for this influential block, constituting 25 per cent of the Democratic vote, has

led to fierce debate on the Middle East. Senator Albert Gore, who is staking his continued viability on New York, has criticized Mr Jackson's lack of support for Israel.

Mr Dukakis, who now has re-established a very small lead in delegates over Mr Jackson, is turning his guns on Mr Gore in an attempt to cut him out of the race and make himself the only alternative to Mr Jackson.

But his rivals both have an interest in preventing this: Mr Gore because he needs a strong showing in a big state to remain in the race, and Mr Jackson because any split in the white vote would help him.

The latest polls suggest Mr Dukakis has the edge in Wisconsin, and a lead in New York over Mr Jackson of 40 percentage points to 29. But they also showed that voters had little enthusiasm for Mr Dukakis, and his support was not nearly as firm as that for Mr Jackson.

Mr Ed Koch, the outspoken Mayor of New York City, kept his distance from all three candidates, however, saying Mr Dukakis was bland and did not excite, Mr Gore too young, and Mr Jackson a man who had embraced Castro and Arafat.

Decision day for Botham elephant

From Alan Franks Narbonne

The elephant withdrawn because of injury on the first day of Ian Botham's transatlantic walk in Hannibal's footsteps, will be pulled out permanently if she has not made a full recovery by tomorrow.

Salammo, one of three elephants on loan from the Italian Circus Medrano, has been given cortisone injections by the expedition's vet, Mr David Taylor, to treat a mild condition of peri-arthritis in the elbow joint of the right foreleg.

She rested yesterday, the second day of the 500-mile expedition, launched to raise money for the Leukaemia Research Fund. The other two, Tah and Dido, walked about one-third of the 25-mile stretch between the villages of Sigan and Nissan.

Mr Taylor said yesterday: "This type of condition is very common in elephants. On a scale of lameness it would register only two out of 10, but this morning when I examined her, there was still evidence of a slight limp." During the 21-day expedition, the animals would not be pressed to do anything which might tire them, he said.

For the rest of the first week the terrain is reasonably flat, although the elephants, like the walkers, have encountered strong cross-winds.

During yesterday's march, Ian Botham told The Times that he was now actively considering walking in the footsteps of Napoleon, from Paris to Moscow, as his next expedition in aid of leukaemia research. He intends to accomplish one such venture each year, and believes the Hannibal walk will raise up to £7 million.

10,000 Soviet advisers kept guessing in Kabul

From Christopher Walker, Moscow

A controversy is brewing about what will happen to some 10,000 Soviet civilian advisers working in Afghanistan, and an unspecified number of military ones, when the 115,000 Soviet troops pull out.

Yesterday Mr Gennady Gerasimov, the chief Kremlin spokesman, sidestepped a question from The Times about Soviet intentions for the advisers, who are performing key jobs in Afghan industry and attempting to rebuild its economic infrastructure along communist lines.

Mr Gerasimov said he had no knowledge of an article on Tuesday in the official economic daily *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, acknowledging for the first time that "about 10,000 Soviet experts are working in Afghanistan now".

The paper said the numbers were so great that flights between Moscow and Kabul were always full.

He quoted a senior engineer from the Ukraine working as technical manager of Afotsr, the main Afghan road haulage association, as saying that he did not feel himself "a temporary worker".

The question mark over the Soviet military and civilian advisers has arisen because the Kremlin has made clear that it sees its military and civilian aid to the Afghan Government of President Najibullah as different in kind from the aid which Washington supplies to the Muslim rebels.

This view is countered by Western diplomats here who say that the Afghan regime owes its main loyalty and probably its survival to Moscow.

Mr Gerasimov said yesterday that any suggestion of a moratorium on Soviet aid was "unacceptable".

The aid was going to what he argued was a legitimate government under treaties stretching back to the Soviet-Afghan friendship pact of 1921.

Earlier, in a lengthy interview with a Bulgarian newspaper, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, flatly rejected US proposals for a symmetrical moratorium on US arms shipments to the rebels and Soviet arms supplies to Kabul.

"The Soviet Union supplies arms to Afghanistan under inter-governmental treaties and inter-governmental agreements... The United States is now inviting us to break these treaties and agreements and to stop honouring them," he stated.

The minister made clear that if the United Nations peace negotiations in Geneva failed, the Soviet troop withdrawal would go ahead on the basis of a separate Soviet-Afghan agreement.

But he gave no indication what would happen to the Soviet advisers.

There are fears in Western circles that some advisers would be left in key positions

and would be supported by Soviet military experts who, along with continuing supplies of weaponry, would enable the Kabul regime to remain in power at least temporarily.

"We shall be acting in a way convenient for the Government of Afghanistan and ourselves," Mr Shevardnadze said. "But let me say once more: we wish success to the Geneva negotiations."

He appeared to contradict remarks attributed to Washington officials in Thursday's *New York Times* that the Soviet Union had indicated it might permit continued US military aid to Afghan rebels after a peace accord comes into effect.

"It is known that the US Government has declared that it will continue to give aid to Afghan opposition forces... It is, frankly speaking, inconceivable to hold this posture and remain a guarantor," the Soviet Foreign Minister said.

He also accused Pakistan of creating obstacles over one of the few remaining issues to be settled at the Geneva talks - which have recently run into serious trouble - namely, a reference to "internationally recognized borders".

The Afghan Government objects to this term, on the grounds that its border with Pakistan was drawn arbitrarily by the British colonial power last century. The term "existing border line" would be an acceptable compromise.

Israel's new spy chief

Shin Bet freshens its image

From David Bernstein, Jerusalem

Israel's Shin Bet gets an unnamed new chief today, in a highly publicized change of guard that would appear to indicate that the country's internal security service, badly shaken by a series of scandals over the past five years, is back on the tracks.

The outgoing head of the agency, Mr Yosef Harmelin, whose impending resignation was announced by Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, during last Sunday's Cabinet meeting, was called in to lead the scandal-ridden service in September 1986.

Mr Harmelin, aged 63, had already served as head of the Shin Bet from 1964 until 1974, and his recall was clearly a stop-gap measure designed to get the service through a crisis brought on by the resignation of its entire top echelon. He replaced Mr Avraham Shalom who, along with his deputy, Mr Reuven Hazak, was forced to resign after it was revealed that they had deliberately lied to an investigating committee on the role of the Shin Bet in the death of two captured Palest-

inian bus hijackers in April, 1984.

The Shin Bet had attempted to shift the blame for the notorious "Bus 300" affair onto the senior army officer involved, General Yitzhak Mordechai. The ploy appeared to be working and General Mordechai faced manslaughter charges until three senior Shin Bet operatives decided to blow the whistle on their chief.

It is not clear what motivated the three - bad conscience, or, as some analysts have suggested, an attempted putsch inside the Shin Bet. But their actions resulted in their dismissal from the service, to be followed by that of Mr Shalom and Mr Hazak.

This left the Shin Bet bereft of its top leadership at a time when its public standing was at a low ebb and its internal morale at rock bottom.

The Shin Bet received a further debilitating blow at the beginning of 1987 when a Circassian army officer, Lieutenant Izat Nafsu, complained that he had been jailed

for 18 years on a false espionage charge fabricated by his Shin Bet investigators. Lieutenant Nafsu's case was reopened and he was absolved last May.

The decision to recall Mr Harmelin, derived first and foremost from the desire to entrust the service, not to an outsider, but to a veteran who knew the service inside out and would be able to stabilize it before handing it over to a serving career officer.

The open publicity given to his impending resignation would seem to be, at least in part, a deliberate effort by the Government to reassure the public that Mr Harmelin has managed to rehabilitate the Shin Bet.

Mr Harmelin's resignation today is to coincide with that of another shadowy Israeli figure, Mr Amiram Nir, the Prime Minister's special adviser on terrorism.

Mr Nir is reported to have liaised closely with Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North, who is now standing trial in the United States over the Iran-Contra arms scandal.

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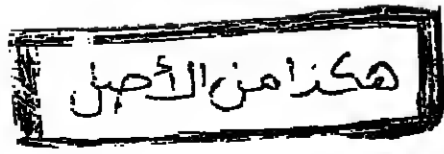
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Decision day for Botham elephant

From Alan Franks
Narbocce

The elephant will be the cause of injury on the walk in Harrogate, if the law is not made recovery by insurance.

Salisbury, one of the elephants of the Harrogate Circus, has been given a 24-hour period to recover from the injury. Mr David Taylor, who is in the charge of the right foreleg.

The second day of the expedition, launched in Harrogate, for the Leighton Research Fund, is about one-third of the way between the Sigan and Nisan.

Mr Taylor said: "This type of condition is common in elephants, it is registered in the records of the Harrogate Zoo. During the day expedition, the elephant would not be present anything which might harm them."

For the rest of the day, the terrain is reasonably good, although the elephant's walk is a little strong on the ground.

During the expedition, Ian Botham told Taylor that he was not in a condition to walk. Botham is a former Test cricketer and is now a professional footballer. He is currently recovering from a knee injury sustained during a match for his club, Ipswich Town.



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Total Balance Paid Off	£4740.00	£5209.99	£5576.28
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adviser in Kabul

its image

Presidential campaign in France

Mitterrand shuns holiday to finish his 'grand plan'

From Philip Jacobson, Paris

While millions of French voters - thankfully put aside all thoughts of the coming presidential election for the Easter holiday, the man who now dominates the campaign will be working flat out on his highly personal manifesto.

Hunched over a vast table in the Elysée Palace, President Mitterrand is scribbling far into the night to complete what sides call le projet: a four-page circular, in the form of a horizon of his objectives for the next seven years if - being somewhat superstitious, he would never say when - the people return him to power.

As the author of several well-received works, the President takes writing seriously, but his staff are beginning to fidget. Their aim is to deliver the great work, in the form of a four-page circular, to every household in the country by this time next week, when publication of the final list of candidates marks the official opening of the campaign.

Since the French are already somewhat punch-drunk with election publicity, Mitterrand's finest phrases may well

be doomed to go straight into the dustbin.

On the evidence of the opinion polls taken after the President announced that he would run again, he now seems to be a racing certainty to beat whoever of M Jacques Chirac and M Raymond Barre carries the conservative colours in the second round.

The small print of the latest flurry of polls makes particularly sweet reading for the Mitterrand camp. While the vast majority of his own

supporters swear that nothing will change their mind before polling day, the President's apparently unstoppable momentum leads one-third of M. Barre's supporters and almost a quarter of M Chirac's to concede that he now looks the likely winner.

Even more significant is the remarkable 32 per cent of those backing the ultra right-wing National Front in the first round who say they intend to vote for M Mitterrand if it comes to a duel with M Chirac.

Despite the bluster of the National Front's leader, M Jean-Marie Le Pen, about demanding the best political "price" for his second-round support, it was widely assumed until now that M Chirac would have the extreme right in the bag. Yet on the latest count well under half of prospective National Front voters see themselves backing him in the run-off (the comparative figure for M Barre is exactly 50 per cent).

Equally encouraging for M Mitterrand's strategists are indications that, in spite of the sharp fall in M Barre's ratings - now as low as 16 per cent - M Chirac no longer seems to be vacuinating up support from his conservative rival.

According to Elysée insiders, the tone of the Mitterrand campaign until polling day on April 24 will be, well, presidential. It seems that he does not intend to overdo the television appearances, judging, correctly enough, that the average French viewer has already had too much politics on the small screen.

Let us leave the last word to M Pierre Joxe, a Socialist Party notable whose adulation for M Mitterrand knows no bounds. Irked by suggestions that M Mitterrand intends to keep the party he founded firmly at arm's length in the last lap, M Joxe told journalists that we had got it wrong.

"M Mitterrand is not the Socialist candidate. He is someone whom we recognize and support but he is escaping from us, and I can tell you that we're proud of this."



M Chirac: Failing to pick up supporters from his rivals.

Storms flood the Outback



Children riding their bicycles through knee-deep water in Todd Mall, central Alice Springs, yesterday after floods swept through the driest part of the Australian Outback.

The floods, the worst for 70 years, came after storms in which the equivalent of the town's average annual rainfall fell within 24 hours.

were under way to declare a state of emergency. He said the disaster could have been avoided if flood-irrigation lakes had been built along the river.

Aboriginal families were swept away as floodwaters swept along the normally dried-up river beds where they live (A Correspondent writes from Sydney).

Alice Springs was cut off, with all roads to the north and south flooded, after the River Todd burst its banks. Large numbers of farm animals drowned when they were caught in the torrent.

"This would not have happened if these lakes had been built," he said.

One Aboriginal woman drowned and at least four others were missing. Many escaped by clambering up trees to await rescue by helicopter, and about 50 others caught in the torrent managed to scramble to safety.

Hundreds of tourists were stranded and hotels had to be evacuated. Residents abandoned their homes to move to higher ground.

Although the flood waters have started to recede, more thunderstorms are forecast.

Mr Steve Haddon, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, said provisional plans

© McMahon dies: Sir William McMahon, who became Australia's oldest Prime Minister in 1971 at the age of 63, died yesterday, aged 80, after a long battle against cancer.

Obituary, page 18

Four aces break French lottery's bank

From Susan MacDonald, Paris

It was exactly a 4,096 to one chance, but the day they broke the bank at the French National Lottery came on Tuesday night, when 22,000 of the 63,000 people who filled in their coupons of chance came out as winners.

The part of the National Lottery that will see its coffers emptied today, when it must pay out 104 million francs (£9.95 million) in winnings, is the ninety-five minute television gamble called *Tapis Vert* (Green Baize), presented after the news on the private First Channel.

An unbeatable four aces brought the lottery's downfall in the not overtaxing

game of trying to guess, by filling in a coupon beforehand, which combination of numbers and suits will come up.

Addicts play nightly and filling in the four aces on the coupons is always a favourite. On Tuesday evening sitting-rooms all over France erupted in whoops of delight as the magic four-ace combination came up on the screen.

Unlike other national lottery games, where an overall sum of money is divided between the winners, *Tapis Vert* allows individuals to win up to a thousand times the amount they bet if they guess all four cards correctly. The

super winner was a man in Perpignan, who amused himself by repeating his four-ace prediction on six different coupons, betting a total of 187 francs (£17.89). He is 187,000 francs richer. A hundred other people have passed the 100,000-franc mark.

A spokesman for the National Lottery put a brave face on it yesterday, explaining that when they conceived this new way of earning money for the State's coffers five months ago they put aside extra funds for just such an occurrence. However, he added, it will take them months to get back in the black again.

Finance Ministry plays Cupid to Singapore singles

By Gavin Bell

Unit 01 of the Ministry of Finance, on the 40th floor of the towering Treasury building in Singapore, is perhaps a curious place to find Cupid.

Yet it is from this unlikely love-nest that government officials direct an innovative and occasionally controversial scheme to encourage well-educated women to marry and produce children for the good of the nation.

Alarmed by a declining population and in particular by a growing number of unmarried women university graduates, the Government is providing a free match-making service for graduates and for those with secondary school qualifications.

The romantic endeavours of the Social Development Unit, strangely a division of the Finance Ministry, are said to be successful, but it was not always so.

Charges of elitism and genetic engineering followed the unit's creation by Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the Prime Minister, who believes that genet-

ics determine a person's abilities. A scheme which gave preferences in education to children whose mothers were graduates was dropped after a public outcry.

Dr Eileen Aw, director of the Social Development Unit, rejects suggestions of meddling with nature. "We focus on women graduates for the simple reason that 40 per cent of them are not marrying. There is no coercion or loss of freedom.

According to Dr Aw, many of Singapore's 10,000 women graduates are left on the shelf because of career commitments, and a tradition of men preferring less well-educated wives.

Thus only graduates are introduced to the lonely academics, although men without degrees who have advanced to executive positions with high salaries may be "upgraded" to the top bracket. Those with only secondary-school qualifications are channelled into a separate group.

They may engage in computer dating and participate in social events ranging from afternoon tea dances to river safaris in Sarawak and courses on buying used cars. A "love cruise" for 260 bright young things was not repeated,

after the boys eyed all the girls indiscriminately, instead of concentrating on those in their designated groups.

However, the course of true love appears to have run smoothly for 411 (graduate) couples, who have made it to the altar under the unit's auspices in the past three years. The unit now boasts almost 40,000 members, with wedding bells ringing more than 20 times a month.

But Dr Aw concedes that many of Singapore's most talented women will remain spinsters. The broader issues of population decline are being tackled by the Ministry of Health, which recently created some confusion and dismay by reversing a vigorous birth control policy. After more than two decades of being urged to stop at two children, Singaporeans are now being asked to have three, and more if they can afford it.

Introducing the new policy last year, Mr Goh Chok Tong, the First Deputy Prime Minister, said: "It was aimed at all who were 'under-performing' in reproductive terms. We have to accept changes as part of life. There is no choice. Those women who had themselves sterilised under the earlier policy had to accept this, he said.

The sudden reversal followed a survey that showed the fertility rate had plummeted from 3.07 in 1978 to 1.44 in 1986, well below the "replacement" rate of 2.1.

The last figure was exceptional, since 1986 was the Year of the Tiger, which, in Asian societies, is not regarded as propitious for marrying or bearing children. If it were maintained, however, the population would be halved by the year 2100.

The Government has introduced benefits for the productive, including tax incentives, preferential housing allocations and school registrations, and extended maternity leave.

An obstacle is an astonishingly high rate of abortions, a vestige of the old birth control programme, which are available on demand for less than £2. It is estimated that of 60,000 conceptions last year, a third were aborted. Dr Paul Cheung, director of the Population Planning Unit, says the problem is hard to solve. "If you tighten the law, they will go underground."

Dr Cheung is defensive of government policies, in view of past criticism. "Some people consider Singapore as some kind of freak country, because we tend to be innovative. But we know our dilemma and the objections very well, and we keep our feet on the ground, I think."

His only concern, he says, is that "if we are too successful with the present policy, we may have to change again."

Power Raker.

The Black & Decker LR1500 Lawnraker really covers ground.

Within its solid steel chassis sits a big 15 inch wide rake with specially curved teeth-like tines. The LR1500's three raking positions turn it from a leaf rake into a powerful scarifier.

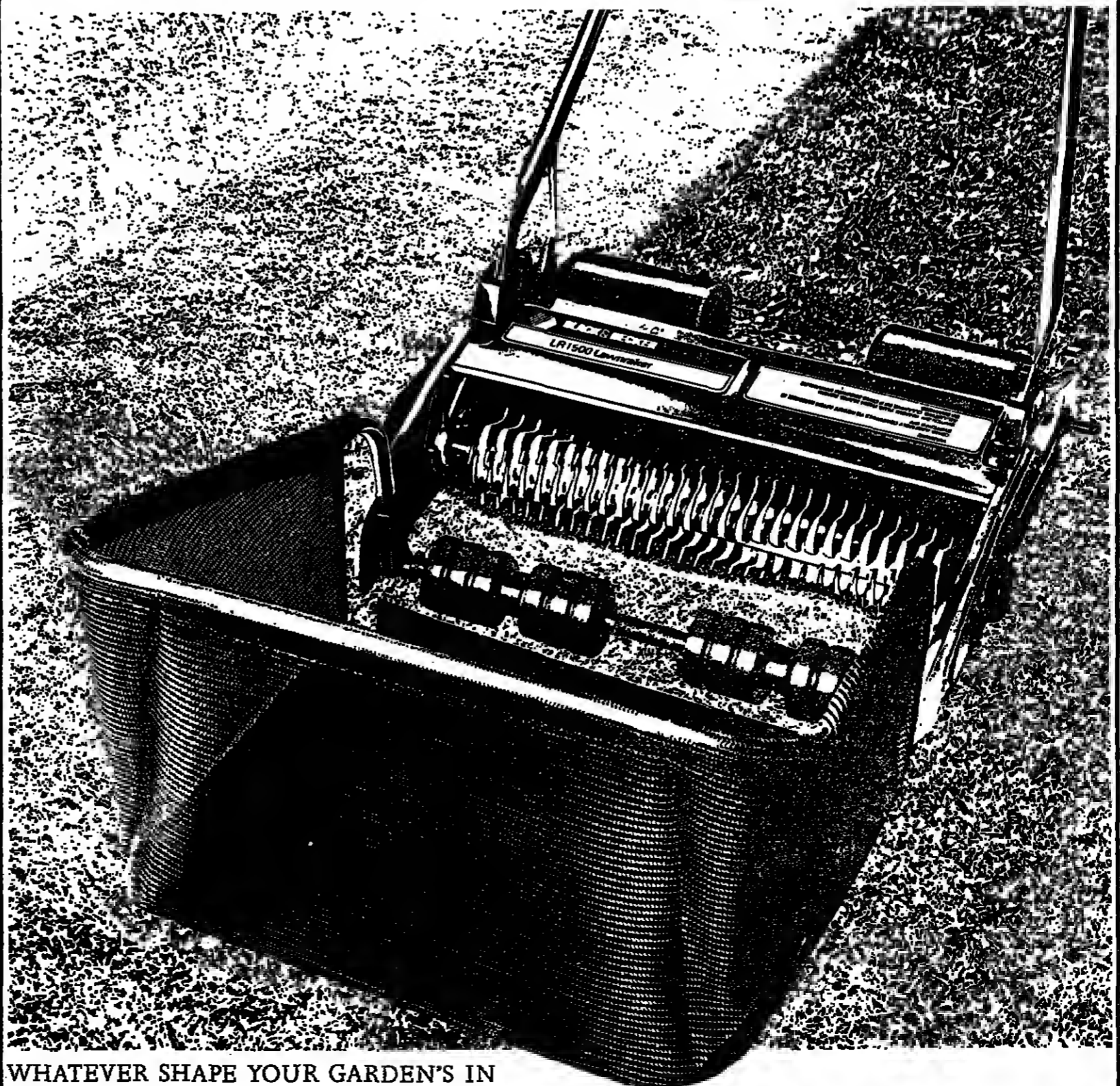
Lower the rake to its lowest position and the tines dig down to pull up the thatch and moss choking your lawn's healthy growth.

The more you use it, the more your lawn will flourish. Grow thick and lush. All over. The wide rollers let you rake right to the lawn edge.

And the large collection bag will take everything you throw it. Especially when the leaves fall.

For a professionally finished lawn without spending a professional's time, the Lawnraker comes unchallenged.

It also comes with the guarantee and experience of the people who put more power into shaping gardens than anyone else. Plus a National Network of Service Stations, should you ever need them.



WHATEVER SHAPE YOUR GARDEN'S IN

TWA FLIGHTS ANGELES

TWA's non-stop flights to Los Angeles International leave from Heathrow at 11.30, arriving 14.30. You can fly on to San Francisco, or take a connecting flight to five other Californian destinations. For details of TWA flights to over 100 U.S. Cities, call your travel agent, or TWA on 01-439 0707, or for a local call outside London, dial 0345 333333.

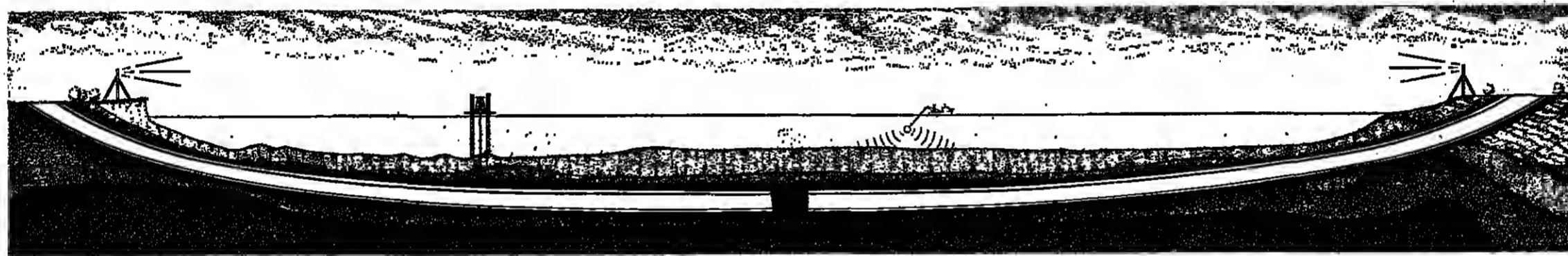
LEADING THE WAY TO THE U.S.A.

TWA

Attack... corruption... police purges... in Cairo... floods alert... plane tragedy... at Aids... golden joke

*£5 billion is being spent
on the Channel Tunnel.*

*It's up to Wimpey to
make sure ends meet.*



Every stage is crucial. But some are more crucial than others.

The feasibility of constructing a tunnel under the Channel has been debated for centuries.

Until Wimpey became involved however, the plans remained mere pipe-dreams.

Work began in 1959 when we carried out the first major geological studies of the sea-bed to find out whether tunnelling was possible.

In 1964 further bore holes built up the picture.

Interest then waned, but when it revived almost 20 years later much work had still to be done to prove the project's feasibility.

هكذا من العمل

A consortium of leading contractors was formed with Wimpey as a founder member: our previous marine experience was obviously going to play a significant part in the study.

At this point, Wimpol, the Wimpey navigation specialists, joined the investigation. Survey vessels, positioned with pin-point accuracy, carried out seismic readings to determine the exact nature of the rock strata.

Then, Wimpey Laboratories assembled drilling rigs from the North Sea to collect samples for more detailed analysis.

The studies confirmed our predictions: a continuous layer of chalk, the ideal material for tunnelling, stretched virtually from coast to coast.

Then over the next three years came the really hard work: proving the case for a twin-bore rail tunnel to a procession of public enquiries and Parliamentary Select Committees.

By 1986, it was concluded that this was indeed 'the only technically feasible and financially viable scheme'.

Having gained an unqualified 'yes' and 'oui' from both Governments, the century's greatest engineering challenge was finally becoming a reality.

As with so many of our major construction projects, initiative and dogged determination had proved just as crucial as technical expertise.

So in 1990, the English half of the Tunnel will meet up with the French half. And we're sure there'll be light at the end of it.

WIMPEY
Breaking new ground.

elped by Renault

SPECTRUM

The once and future Kings

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood...

Martin Luther King, Washington, June 15 1963



Family album: Martin Luther King III, aged three, with his father, sister and mother. Inset: King today

Twenty years on, the spring is coming again to Martin Luther King's Georgia, bringing green and warmth to the little Ebenezer Baptist Church...

So what happened to those four children? Did the dream die with Martin Luther King in Memphis on April 4, 1968? Twenty years on, Charles Bremner sought them out

successors took heart this month from a national opinion poll of young people. Asked whom they most revered as a hero...



business, they get to a certain level and never get promoted.

few in America would disagree with him. As the country takes stock two decades on, it is clear that King wrought a revolution...

second-class. They see it as a duty to live up to the life of their father, although the younger ones hardly knew him.

If his father came back to today's Georgia, "he would be pleased yet sad", King says, sitting in his comfortable office on the second floor of Atlanta's county administration.

A soft-spoken and pleasant young man, Martin King "Marty" to his family, is the only one of those "four little children" to pursue a political career.

Yolanda, now aged 31, runs a local theatre company and directs the Martin Luther King Centre in Atlanta along with her brother Martin and their mother.

The South and America at large have come a long way from segregation laws that kept "niggers" on the back of the bus...

The four children grew up to learn that, despite the victories of their father's movement, to be black in America is still to be

Dexter King says he is appalled at the lack of self-confidence of young American blacks. "I was surprised that many of them did not know who Martin Luther King was."

King points to progress in local politics. Six big cities - Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Washington, Philadelphia and Atlanta - have black mayors...

like America. The Commission on the Status of Women...

While some may never have heard of the civil rights leader, his

Apart from the cases of individuals such as Bill Cosby, the entertainer, blacks are still being kept out of the upper reaches of American society, King says.

Grande dame moves on

It is Easter week in Paris and tourists fill the streets, but the man at the reception desk in the stately Hotel Meurice says with deference that they are very quiet at the moment.

Once the haven of stars and artists, the Meurice Hotel, Paris, has a new owner



Meurice man: Salvador Dali in 1970, holding court in Paris

Yesterday came the news that the Meurice, overlooking the Tuileries in the rue de Rivoli, has been sold for about £35 million by Grand Metropolitan, who want to concentrate on their two major hotels in Paris...

one that replaced it in 1907. Its fame belonged to the days when society would not have considered "jetting" anywhere. They arrived in elegance and style and expected their way of life to continue wherever they went.

The second, grander Hotel Meurice rose on the rue de Rivoli some 30 years later. Comfort, efficiency and discretion were the cardinal rules that drew the crowned heads of Europe, including Queen Victoria and Edward VII to stay in this building and the

Germany requisitioned the hotel and turned it into their military command headquarters for the Paris region. History reveals that the entrance to the hotel cellar was never discovered by the Germans, although no mention is made of exactly what was below their feet.

One of the features of the hotel was its magnificent roof garden, where many came to see and be seen and gaze out at one of the best views of chic Paris.

The regional commander, General Dietrich von Sholtitz, resided in room 213. It was here that he was captured alive, after a short but bloody battle during the liberation of Paris in 1944, and signed his surrender in the grand salon on the first floor.

No serious structural damage was done to the enormous edifice, but extensive repairs were needed when it was allowed to become an hotel again in 1946. It had certainly deteriorated under German occupation and modern plumbing facilities replaced those that had remained the same since the 1907 - which says something for a European idea of comfort.

Famous guests now included film stars and artists, among them Salvador Dali, who always held court in Paris at the Meurice. It was he who in the early 1970s inaugurated a new Copper Bar and Copper Grill restaurant - to replace the billiard room in the basement - all decked out with heavy mock Chippendale furniture.

Susan MacDonald

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 1529

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution key at the bottom.

FINDINGS

A weekly series on research. Includes articles on Classics (Aeneas), Archaeology (Two grape pips from British neolithic sites), and a poem 'A poetical equivalent to Plato'.

Large advertisement for 'EXPERIENCE' featuring various electronic products like Sony 14" FST Television, Sanyo VHS Video Recorder, Amstrad Word Processor, and Sanyo Camcorder. Includes prices and promotional offers.



1 Pennington Street, London, E1 9XN Telephone: 01-481 4100

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE GREAT UNCOMFORTER

The Christian symbol of the cross, so extraordinary an emblem of a religion of love, is so familiar as to be almost invisible.

As now, so in the eighteenth century Church of England, as it settled comfortably into relaxed security after the religious quarrels and excitement of the previous era.

The mission of the founder of Methodism was to present the truths of Christianity in fresh ways to those who had grown indifferent.

His conversion, 250 years ago, is being commemorated this year throughout the Methodist Church worldwide.

Parallels between the religious climate of 1738 and 1988 must always be made with care.

The churches have responded to the mood of the age by emphasizing where they can come to terms with it, and diminishing what distinguishes them from it.

enthusiasm and idealism of youth. Wesley was a loyal Anglican, no self-appointed saviour of mankind, nor is or was Methodism ever a cult in the modern sense.

Modern Methodists would be wise to admit that they are now in the Church of England's boat themselves, and that their own sharp edge has also been blunted by two centuries of institutional religion.

The Church of England itself is beginning to reclaim Wesley as one of its own at last. That may be an ecumenical advance.

What distinguished early Methodism was its intense appeal to the working class. The immediate measure of the Church of England's failure to recognize its importance was its inability to welcome these new converts into its own fellowship.

Methodism's membership has now become very similar to that of Anglicanism. Whatever it was that explained Wesley's appeal to the unchurched folk of England, it seems gradually to have faded.

Wesley saw that Christianity has hard truths to tell, and should not be shy of them. At the commemoration of Jesus Christ's death on Good Friday and His resurrection on Easter Day, the Church must resist the temptation to blur the reality of those events by turning them into sentimental metaphors.

SCHOOLS OF HOPE

Behind yesterday's row about Amnesty and the IRA, behind the police search for the vicious funeral killers, behind the violence and the high-volume arguments which disfigure the public life of Northern Ireland, some small progress towards a better life for the province quietly goes on.

For many decades, the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities in Northern Ireland have educated almost all of their children in parallel but separately maintained systems.

By degrees, these groups became a fledgling movement and in due course founded an integrated secondary school on the outskirts of Belfast. Other local initiatives took place — often very quietly.

The Government now proposes an additional form of status, to be called unattractively "grant-maintained integrated status".

The struggling fund-raisers for the handful of integrated schools which started from scratch would readily testify to problems of this trap.

The Government has been slow to respond to the integration movement, fearful of political controversy, anxious about preserving standards in new institutions and conscious of the opposition of the Roman Catholic hierarchy — which has lately been moderated.

stability of school institutions in a turbulent society — also on the virtual identity of the syllabuses in the two systems.

But, it may be asked, is the new move compatible with the Government's desire in the rest of the country to allow parental demand to create and maintain separate denominational schools?

This is not because the Government is incapable of inconsistency between Northern Ireland and the rest of the country. There are numerous examples of that.

The change proposed is in fact perfectly consistent with the philosophy of extending the scope of parental choice.

The desire for integrated schooling is normally explained as a way of dissolving barriers which create communal division. Although some hope can be placed in this argument, it should not be exaggerated.

The most important division in Northern Ireland is between those who yearn for the peaceful assurance of democratic politics and those who practise or endorse violence as a political method.

Some numbers, however, have never been issued. Those that spell out obscenities or offensive messages are likely to remain banned from use.

Some desirable items have slipped through. The comedian, Mr Jimmy Tarbuck, reportedly drives around in a car with the number plate COM 1C and the conjurer Mr Paul Daniels with MAG 1C.

It is not a very edifying public trade, it will be said. Personalized number plates suggest a vulgar and ostentatious form of vanity — particularly when they cost more than the cars. But it is harmless, perfectly legal, and clearly brings pleasure to those who so choose to indulge themselves.

The professor and a colleague had recently returned from the Himalayas, where they claimed to have come upon a yeti unaware.

Realities of life on the Rock

From the Chief Minister of Gibraltar

Sir, I fail to see why the position of my people as regards relations with Spain should cast any given size of shadow over Anglo-Spanish relations.

Her Majesty has no more loyal subjects than the people of Gibraltar and it is natural that we should expect, with our strong belief in the values of British society and the sense of fair play of the British people that we will not be coerced or intimidated to serve the perceived national interests of others at the expense of ours.

I am sure, if you give the matter further thought, you will come to realise that the qualities of not sacrificing principle to opportunism and not giving in to "political realities", for example within the EEC when it comes to defending British interests, are those your newspaper has often admired in Mrs Thatcher.

During the working party's deliberations it was clearly understood that if this power were used in the way suggested by Bernard Levin, such use would amount to a breach of the code.

It is worth mentioning that the code creates clear offences so that those actually responsible for impeding freedom of speech can be subject to disciplinary action.

The implementation of new family law, new child-care law and a family court system is an exceedingly complex legal and administrative task.

The damage to families of the present courts is widely experienced and well documented. When will families become a priority?

Too much on top. Sir, Since you report (March 26) that many balding men may be able to have their hair restored, could not the tricologists turn their attention to those other sufferers like myself whose hair grows too abundantly, even in their seventies?

Not only is this condition costly in time, money and temper, but we unfortunately always appear unkempt. How I yearn for a tidy head of hair.

Posts and outposts. From Ms Elizabeth Asfaw Sir, I have followed the correspondence regarding late deliveries by the Post Office and I thought you would be interested to learn that The Times gets to his box number in two days.

No kidding? From Mr Ludovic Kennedy Sir, With reference to Mr Chris Bonington's forthcoming expedition to the Himalayas to search for the "abominable snowman", or yeti (report and photograph, March 31), he will no doubt be aware of an interview I conducted 29 years ago tomorrow, as presenter of the Associated Rediffusion (as it was then) television programme, This Week, with a Professor Duncan Grant-Hetherington, of the University of Camelford.

Language of flowers. From Alice M. Fennell Sir, While stopping at Harrow-on-the-Hill tube station, I noticed that when the Daffodils are closed up they shake their heads. And that when they are opened out they nod their heads! I don't think that any body has noticed this, so that I think I'm the only one who has noticed it.

Freedom of speech on the campus. From the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Liverpool Sir, In his article, "This poisoned-ivy league" (March 28), Bernard Levin has failed to comprehend the responsibilities placed on universities under the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 and, consequently, has made a totally unwarranted and unworthy attack on this university.

Guillotine fears for libraries. From the Chief Executive of the Library Association Sir, The Local Government Finance Bill, whose principal purpose is to introduce the "community charge" in England, has now completed its committee stage in the House of Commons.

ON THIS DAY. APRIL 1 1918. George V visited his troops during the last great German offensive. A modest man, he was clearly moved by the tremendous response to his call, "Are we downhearted?"

KING AT THE FRONT. VISIT TO THE BATTLE TROOPS. The King ... sent a letter to the C-in-C, Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, expressing admiration for "the indomitable courage and unflinching tenacity" displayed by all those resisting the German advance.

Safety on trains. From Mrs Gertrude Shilling Sir, There is only one solution to stop the danger to women travelling alone ("Woman's body found on train", March 24) and that is to bring back "ladies only" compartments. If then a woman sees a man attempting to enter the carriage she can immediately pull the communication cord.

Language of flowers. From Alice M. Fennell Sir, While stopping at Harrow-on-the-Hill tube station, I noticed that when the Daffodils are closed up they shake their heads. And that when they are opened out they nod their heads! I don't think that any body has noticed this, so that I think I'm the only one who has noticed it.

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Vertical text on the right margin, partially obscured and difficult to read. Appears to be a list of names or a column of text.

SALE ROOM

Violin fetches world record of £473,000 at music sale

The "Marie Hall" violin, made by Antonio Stradivari, being played by Miss Alexa Wilson (below), when it was sold for a world record auction price of £473,000 at Sotheby's yesterday.



The first violin was bought in 1905 by Miss Hall, for whom Vaughan Williams composed his The Lark Ascending, and when her daughter sold it in 1968 the price of £22,000 was also a record for a musical instrument.

Architecture

Supporting a royal rebellion

By Charles Kneritt, Architecture Correspondent

"A little rebellion, now and then," Thomas Jefferson, the American President and amateur architect once said, "is a good thing."

Dramatic change in Britain's farming landscape predicted

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Some 2,500,000 acres, or nearly 4,000 square miles, of farmland in Britain are likely to become redundant in the next few years. As a result, the landscape of the twenty-first century is likely to be markedly different from that which we know today.

BIRTHS MARRIAGES DEATHS

Now, by means of the physical death of his son, God has made you his friends. In order to bring you, holy, pure, and faultless, into his presence. Colossians 1:22.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SALE RENTALS SUPER SECRETARIES TEMPTING TIMES DOMESTIC & CATERING SITUATIONS LEGAL NOTICES

THE PIANO WORKSHOP LONDON... THE SPRING HAS SPRUNG... MARKSON PIANOS... ALL TRAVELERS... WANTED

WIMBLEDON TICKETS WANTED... FLATSHARE... RENTALS... ANNOUNCEMENTS

How near we are to the cure depends on you... LEUKAEMIA RESEARCH FUND

Cancer Together we can beat it... Cancer Research Campaign

MEMORIAL SERVICES... ANNOUNCEMENTS

FINDING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET THAT ONE SPECIAL PERSON? You're the type of person who lives comfortably and enjoys a good life...

PERSONAL COLUMNS

PERSONAL COLUMNS: A collection of various notices, advertisements, and legal notices. Includes sections for Births, Marriages, Deaths, Announcements, For Sale, Rentals, Super Secretaries, Tempting Times, Domestic & Catering Situations, Legal Notices, and various personal ads.

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

This selective guide to entertainment and events throughout Britain appears from Monday to Friday, followed in the Saturday section by a preview of the week ahead.

Items for inclusion should be sent to The Times Information Service, PO Box 7, 1 Virginia Street, London E1 9XN

BOOKING KEY: * Seats available; ** Returns only; (D) Access for disabled

FILMS: Also on national release; ** Advance booking possible

BABY BOON (PG): Modish comedy about a power-hungry careerist (Diane Keaton) whose life is thrown haywire by the arrival of an apple-cheeked baby girl.

CRY FREEDOM (PG): Richard Attenborough's bumper bundle of exciting spectacle and liberal sentiments.

EMPIRE OF THE SUN (PG): J.G. Ballard's autobiographical novel about a British child in Shanghai caught by the invading Japanese in the Second World War.

THREE MEN AND A CRIB (PG): Brash Hollywood remake of a flimsy French success. Tom Selleck, Ted Danson and Steve Guttenberg play confirmed bachelors who are thrown into the problems of baby-care.

FATAL ATTRACTION (18+): A spurned lover (Glenn Close) takes revenge on Michael Douglas, his wife (Anne Archer) and family.

THE LAST EMPEROR (18+): Bertolucci's gorgeously photographed epic tells the extraordinary story of Pui Yi, China's last imperial ruler.

MOONSTRUCK (PG): Should Cher play it safe and marry Danny Aiello, or follow her heart and go for her brother.

KISS ME KATE: Adriana Ciolek's RSC presentation with extra Noble Porter. Savoy Theatre, Strand WC2 (01-636 8888).

LETTICE AND LOVAGE: Maggie Smith and Margaret Tyacke waging eccentric war against the modern world in Peter Shaffer's new comedy.

NANA: Shared Experience's vigorous production of Zola's tale of discarded bourgeois in the chic Paris.

LONG RUNNERS: Beyond Reasonable Doubt: Queens Theatre (01-734 1166).

WORD-WATCHING: DOOLALLY: (b) From Doolally, the British Raj's transit camp about 100 miles NE of Bombay.

ENTERTAINMENTS: CONCERTS: ZOLA'S NANA: MATINEE TOMORROW 4.30 ALL SEATS £6

OPERAS: ALBERT HALL: THE BEST OF FRIENDS: Directed by James Frawley

THEATRE: THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE: THE PORTRAIT OF AN AGONY: LAURENCE OLIVIER

THEATRE: YOU NEVER CAN TELL: TONY GARDNER: "Theatre's most powerful production"

THEATRE: CATS: "A magnificent production": "The most powerful production"

THEATRE: THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE: THE PORTRAIT OF AN AGONY: LAURENCE OLIVIER

THEATRE: YOU NEVER CAN TELL: TONY GARDNER: "Theatre's most powerful production"



Flight back in time by a lord of the theatre

Peter Brook is too much a man of the theatre to find a cosy niche in the cinema, yet he keeps returning to the silver screen.

novels by William Golding and Marguerite Duras, to his own acclaimed Royal Shakespeare Company productions from the 1960s

OUT OF TOWN: EDINBURGH: The Straw Chair: Edinburgh not in the 18th century, exiled to the now deserted island of St Kilda.

OPERA: CARMEN: Opera 80's shoe-string production of Bizet's opera in the title role and Ivor Bolton conducting.

ROCK: THE MISSION: Gothic rockers led by ex-Sisters Of Mercy, Wayne Hussey and Crispian Steele-Perkins.

GALLERIES: LOST MAGIC KINGDOMS: A show mixing primitive and modern art and design.

WALKS: A TOUR OF THE BEST CITY CHURCHES: meet Museum of London, 2.30pm, £3.

OTHER EVENTS: EASTER ANTIQUES FAIR: 48 stalls, 10.30-5.00pm, in the Spread Eagle Hotel.

TOP FILMS AND VIDEOS: UNITED STATES: (1) Blaxi Blues, (2) Johnny Be Good, (3) The Fox and The Hound

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THEATRE: CATS: "A magnificent production": "The most powerful production"

GARDENS

ARGYLLE: In Cula, Isle of Skye, by Easdale, interesting garden, garden, cherries, azaleas, rhododendrons.

COUNTY DOWN: Castle Ward, Strangford, Downpatrick, 7m NE of Downpatrick.

CUMBERLAND: Acorn Bank Garden, Temple Sowerby, nr Penrith, 6m E of Penrith.

DEVON: Stroudwater, nr Bickington, Ashburton, 1m N of Ashburton.

DORSET: Little Platt, Plush, 3m SE of Enderbury, midway between

DYFED: Caerby Lodge Garden, Amroth, Narbeth, adjoining Amroth, beside Carmarthen Bay.

HAMPSHIRE: Houghton Lodge, 1.6m S of Stockbridge on minor road

KENT: Hever Castle, 3m SE of Edenbridge, midway between

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: Canons Ashby House, Canons Ashby, nr Towcester.

ST MATTHEW PASSION: Christy's of Southwark Cathedral, the Tallis Chamber Choir.

ST JOHN PASSION: see caption. Royal Festival Hall, South Bank.

OSCAR AT SIXTY: Selection of films to celebrate 60th anniversary of Academy Award.

VERDI'S FALSTAFF: Staged and sung in new English translation by Amanda Holden.

JEAN COCTEAU, 1889-1963: Exhibition of graphic works used to illustrate his novel.

A TRIFLING MARK OF MY ESTEEM: Small display celebrating Valentine's Day.

OLD MASTER DRAWINGS: Mainly landscapes, lent by University of Leiden.

Theatre: Jeremy King; Films: Geoff Brown; Concerts: Max Harrison.

THE MIRACLE WORKER: "A magnificent production"

JOURNEY'S END: "A magnificent production"

THE NEW PLAYERS: "A magnificent production"

THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE: "A magnificent production"

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Advertisement for 'FINAL EASTERS' featuring 'OUR FOUR FILMS ONLY' and 'reasonable offer'.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

A&M Group seeks up to £2m in placing

A&M Group, the USM-listed television studio, stage and furniture hire company, has embarked on a capital-raising exercise because of exceptional write-offs in its non-core businesses.

A&M will be raising between £1 million and £2 million through the placing of new 10p shares. Existing shareholders will be able to apply for shares.

Elys increases to £713,000

Elys (Wimbleton), the department store group, reported pretax profits up from £473,000 to £713,000 in the year end-January.

Edwards for Bell division

Robert Holmes & Court, the chairman of Bell Group, has appointed Mr Michael Edwards, provost of City of London Polytechnic, managing director of London-based Bell Group International.

Blenheim tops £1.4m

Blenheim Exhibitions, Britain's leading exhibitions and conference organizer, more than doubled pretax profits from £602,000 to £1.43 million in the year to end-February.

Blenheim says its over-riding aim is to increase earnings and dividends per share and achieve strong cash generation.

Berry, Birch lifts profit

Berry, Birch and Noble, the USM-quoted financial services and insurance broking group, lifted pretax profits from £909,000 to £955,000 in the year to end-January.

L&G plans to raise £187m

Legal & General Group plans to raise £350 million (£187.26 million) by a Euro-commercial paper programme.

Senior leaves questions unanswered

Senior Engineering Group is asking shareholders to take it on trust that 1987 was a reasonably good year. But even after a close look at the figures, it is by no means easy to be sure that this was the case.

At least seven deals involved cash and paper. There was a one-for-three rights issue at 60p to help fund expansion and redress the balance sheet.

However, it is a source of irritation that the group will not break down just how much acquisitions contributed at the pretax level.

It is academic whether it is called a strike or a dispute, but the sale upset cost Senior £1.22 million, charged as an exceptional item above the line.

Because of the weight of a share capital expanded by a rights issue and a placing, out

earnings a share show only a modest advance - from 5.09p to 5.22p a share.

But the rate of increase should be markedly higher in 1988. The pretax profit line from now should start to look more impressive as acquisitions make a fuller contribution.

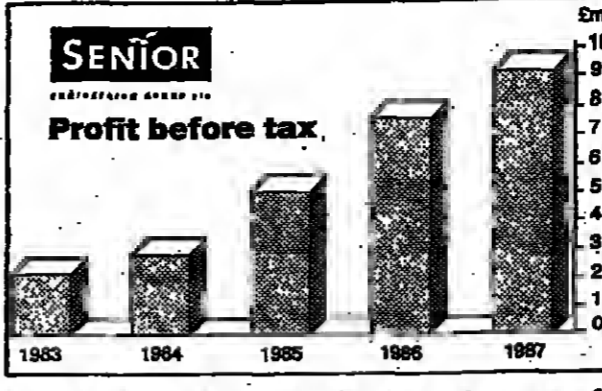
The year ended with gearing down from 27.8 per cent to 6.7 per cent, having been up to 60 per cent at one point during the year.

Some divisions, notably mining, are likely to remain dull performers, but Senior - oop shot of loss-makers and with good order books in most areas - should be good for pretax profits in the £13 million region in 1988.

There was an absence of any contribution from the Perex manufacturing business which had made about £500,000 the year before.

Sintrom

Mr Terry Cave has had to take some tough decisions since leaving Control Data, the large US company, last year



and stepping down a division to take over as chief executive at Sintrom, the Reading, Berkshire, manufacturer and supplier of computer peripheral systems.

The re-structuring which he initiated led to a move from volume business to higher value products where the competition is less fierce and the margins are more comfortable.

For the year just ended, Sintrom marked time, with pretax profits marginally lower at just over £1 million, on turnover up from £16 million to £17.5 million.

There was an absence of any contribution from the Perex manufacturing business which had made about £500,000 the year before.

Elders Resources rises 54%

Melbourne (Reuter) - Elders Resources yesterday forecast a large expansion of its minerals marketing and gold output, with the main contribution expected from the reverse takeover of New Zealand Forest Products.

The 47.5 per cent-owned associate of Elders IXL had earlier reported a 54 per cent rise in net profit for the first half of the year ended December 31, to Aus\$26 million (£10 million).

Earlier this week its rival Merrill Lynch, the New York securities house, reduced its estimate of full-year pretax profits from last year's £680 million to £670 million.

Shares of GEC, the electronics company, hit a low yesterday with a fall of 2p to 145p as brokers continued to take a cautious line on prospects for the group.

About 10 million shares changed hands on talk that analysts at James Capel, the broker, had joined the growing band of disgruntled brokers which has cut profits forecasts.

Earlier this week its rival Merrill Lynch, the New York securities house, reduced its estimate of full-year pretax profits from last year's £680 million to £670 million.

Brokers now fear that the possible slowdown in profits growth will also take its toll on GEC's fast-growing dividend.

The rest of the equity market spent another disappointing session with fund managers and brokers alike taking advantage of the depressed conditions to make an early start to the Easter break.

The lack of support was clearly reflected in share prices which drifted throughout most of the session but managed to close just above their worst levels.

The FT-SE 100 ended the second leg of the three-week account 14.4 lower at 1,742.5, while the narrower FT index of 30 shares lost 11.4 to 1,386.7, having been as low as 14.6 points off.

But the latest surge in the pound was good news for Government securities, reviving hopes of another early cut in interest rates.

However, the pound's strength turned out to be bad news for the big dollar earners - most of which suffered an early markdown before clawing back some of the losses.

Amersham International: speculative bubble bursts. The FT-SE 100 ended the second leg of the three-week account 14.4 lower at 1,742.5, while the narrower FT index of 30 shares lost 11.4 to 1,386.7, having been as low as 14.6 points off.

Amersham is still regarded as the most vulnerable of the privatization issues. The news earlier this year that BP would be allowed to proceed with its £2.5 billion offer for Britoil only served to increase speculation.

But there are other hurdles to cross, apart from the Government, for any company wanting to try its luck with Amersham.

Amersham is still regarded as the most vulnerable of the privatization issues. The news earlier this year that BP would be allowed to proceed with its £2.5 billion offer for Britoil only served to increase speculation.

returning to its former profitable levels. Sintrom should be able for about £1.7 million in good for about £1.7 million in the current year.

The shares have recovered some ground since the market fell but there still remains a very strong family holding of about 70 per cent which has not helped liquidity.

Assuming the family decides to accept some dilution if shares are issued as part of an acquisition, then at the current level of 95p, the shares look fairly valued.

Anglo/B&H

Next Friday, April 8, shareholders approving and Stock Exchange permitting, dealings will restart in both Anglo-United and Burnett & Hallams (which will resume under the new name of NSM).

Since their suspension at the end of January, the final touches have been put to a complex rescue plan for the sorry mess that has existed at B&H since it embarked on an ill-fated diversification programme in the early 1980s.

Under the scheme, Anglo will swap its British coal business, worth £42 million, and about £20 million of related debt, for a 31.4 per cent stake in B&H.

STOCK MARKET

GEC drops to a low of 145p as analysts fear slower dividend growth

Shares of GEC, the electronics company, hit a low yesterday with a fall of 2p to 145p as brokers continued to take a cautious line on prospects for the group.

About 10 million shares changed hands on talk that analysts at James Capel, the broker, had joined the growing band of disgruntled brokers which has cut profits forecasts.

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WPP for m... Acorn sinks to £3.2m deficit... Evode pu... Italian T... Base Lending Rates... ALPHA STOCKS table with columns for Vol '000, Code, and Price.

WALL STREET

Dow slips as dealers stay on the sidelines

(Reuters) - Wall Street shares fell slightly in early trading with many dealers on the sidelines before the long weekend.

A fall in the dollar contributed to early selling, analysts said. US coupons fell in price, pushing up yields.

The Dow Jones industrial average was down one point at 1,977.12. Declining issues led gains ones by two to one.

Among the recently weak technology issues, Teledyne was off 1% at 322 1/2 but Digital Equipment rose 1/2 to 103 3/4 and IBM tacked on 1/4 to 105 1/4.

Westinghouse Electric Corp expects sales to rise by 8 1/2 per cent this year after two years of flat or slightly lower sales, Mr John Marous, the chairman, told analysts yesterday.

"The 8 1/2 per cent (sales) growth targeted for 1988 is achievable," he said. "And we are well positioned to achieve the profitable growth we seek this year."

He added that the company's target is earnings per share growth of a least 10 per cent a year. In 1987, Westinghouse earned \$5.12 a share on sales of \$10.68 billion, off from \$10.73 billion in 1986.

Table with columns for Mar 30, Mar 29, Mar 28, Mar 27, Mar 26, Mar 25, Mar 24, Mar 23. Lists various stocks and their price changes.

WORLD MARKETS: TOKYO

Nikkei loses ground on dollar weakness

(Reuters) - Share prices closed down in active trading due to an absence of fresh positive factors, Wall Street's overnight drop and the unstable dollar, brokers said.

"The market was also getting a little overhyped," said a broker at one of the big four Japanese securities houses, referring to the market's 999.35-point surge over the previous three days.

The Nikkei index lost 59.81 points, or 0.23 per cent, to 26,260.26. It scored 366.98 points on Wednesday.

Declines led advances 1.2 to one on a turnover of 1.4 billion shares against 1.8 billion previously.

Communications, electrical, rubber, auto, warehouse, pulp/paper, construction and precision instrument issues lost ground. Securities house, oil, non-life insurance and credit/lease shares rose.

The market is near the 26,646.43 record high hit on October 14 last year. Leading Japanese brokerages had been generating tremendous trade to mark the beginning of the stock market fiscal year this week and this helped boost the index at a rate that made predictions that records would be broken this month appear likely to become reality, brokers said.

In addition to a generally weaker trend overseas, a record-high level of margin buying has also deterred investors, brokers said.

Other brokers said leading securities houses were cooling down activity so as not to bring the market up too fast.

FRANKFURT

Shares end mixed in quiet trading

(Reuters) - West German share prices closed a quiet pre-Easter session mixed compared with Wednesday's finish, with an easier bias after losses on Wall Street and the weaker dollar depressed prices initially.

The Commerzbank 60-share index, calculated at mid-session, fell to 1,377.5 from the previous day's 1,379.7.

The two main exceptions to the lacklustre trading were speculation that Daimler was building up its stake in the electrical concern, and the retailer Asko which said its acquisition of part of the US Saffery group had been approved.

AEG ended at DM252, up DM8.10. Siemens, the biggest of the electrical sector, fell DM2.10 to DM359, while preference shares in the computer-maker Nixdorf tumbled DM5.50 to DM338.50.

Late bargain-hunting showed up in the Boersen-Zeitung 30-share index, calculated four times a session, which ended at 294.01.

HONG KONG

Late support boosts prices

(Reuters) - Share prices closed steady in moderate trading late buying support, brokers said.

The Hang Seng index rose 15.05 points to end the day at 2,543.97 after falling 3.83 points initially. The Hong Kong index gained 11.04 points to 1,669.99. Turnover was HK\$668.12 million against HK\$892 million on Wednesday.

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

Table with columns for Call, Put, Strike, and various option types. Lists traded options for different stocks.

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Advertisement for Mentor training services, featuring icons of people and text describing the benefits of technology-based training.

RECENT ISSUES

Table listing recent issues of various stocks, including AMI Healthcare, Archer (AJ), Assoc Nursing, etc.

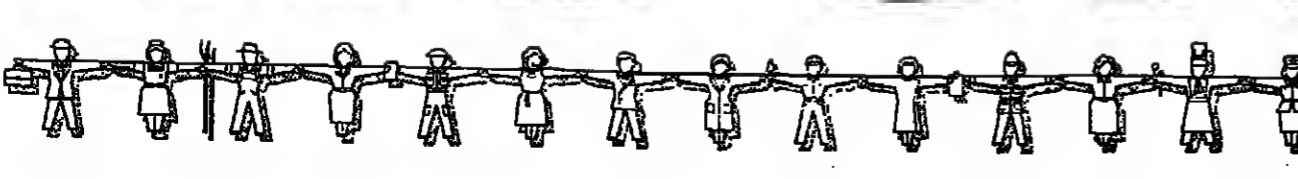
RIGHTS ISSUES

Table listing rights issues for various companies like Barro N/P, Charron N/P, etc.

APPOINTMENTS

Hamleys: Mr Bob Brown has been named managing director. Acasos & Hutchison: Mr John Durrant has become managing director. Hadley Cannon (Holdings): Mr Peter Eddell has been appointed chairman. Charles Heneghan managing director, Mr David Carrington finance director, and Mr Francis Mathew and Mr Ian Hargreaves directors. Vauxhall Motors Ltd: Mr David Wallis becomes a director. Cooper Gay & Co: Mr Stephen Murriner and Mr Tom Wilson have been named directors. London & Metropolitan: Mr Peter Haswood becomes a non-executive director from June 15.

FOR THIS MUCH



مكتبة الأصيل

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, containing various text and graphics.

Main table containing unit trust information with columns for Unit Name, Offer Price, Change, and Yield. Includes sections for UK Unit Trusts, Overseas Unit Trusts, and various investment categories like Equity, Bond, and Money Market.

UNLISTED SECURITIES

Table of unlisted securities with columns for Company Name, Price, Change, and Yield. Lists various private companies and their financial metrics.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table of investment trusts with columns for Trust Name, Offer Price, Change, and Yield. Lists various investment vehicles and their performance.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

Table of foreign exchange rates for various currencies, including Sterling, Deutsche Mark, and Japanese Yen.

MONEY MARKETS

Table of money market rates, including discount rates, Treasury bills, and other financial instruments.

Vertical advertisements on the right side of the page, including 'Disney', 'If you're getting too big your boss...', 'MR FRIDAY', 'BETTESWORTH', and 'PARK ASSOCIATES'.

CAR BUYERS' GUIDE

Continued from page 31

GENERAL

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QUALITY USED CARS from our extensive range

Table with 2 columns: Car Model (e.g., Fiat Ritmo, Opel Corsa) and Price/Details.

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- List of car models and prices: 1988 Granada 2.0i, 1988 Volvo 740 GLE, 1988 Volvo 740 GLE, etc.

B.M.W. AUTHORISED DEALERS

Aitwood logo and contact information: Slough, Maidenhead, Hexagon.

Table with columns: Model, No. in Stock, Price Range. Lists various BMW models and their prices.

Hexagon logo and contact information: 01-348 5151.

Scott-Hall logo and contact information: 0532 620641.

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FOCUS EXECUTIVE CARS

Prophets of Gerrards Cross

BMW APPROVED USED CARS

- List of BMW models and prices: (5) 318 2-4r, (6) 318 2-4r, (7) 318 2-4r, etc.

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Motoring by Clifford Webb

Import curbs keep Toyota in check



The launch this week of an entire Toyota Carina range of sedan family cars, only six months after a similar exercise with the Escort-sized Corolla, is yet more evidence of the Japanese company's astonishing resources in finance, engineering manpower and facilities.

Toyota's ability to develop and produce hatchback, saloon and estate models simultaneously, instead of being spread over years as in Europe, raises the spectre of what could happen if the long restriction on Japanese car imports was lifted.

Toyota's share of the 11 per cent Japanese import quota is slightly under two per cent. Last year that amounted to 38,267 cars, of which 6,598 were Carinas - not really a threat to Ford's 80,119, Rover's 301,811 or Vauxhall's 270,778.

Toyota's new Carina GL 1.6i is in line with European thinking. The model now being replaced was a different animal. The first Carina to feature front-wheel drive and transverse engine, it was neither eye-catching nor exciting to drive, but proved to be such competent, reliable family transport that it has built up one of the most satisfied owner groups of any car.

French smooth the path for diesel

The 1.9-litre diesel engine which powers both the Peugeot 309 and Citroen BX is the biggest-selling diesel in Britain. Its popularity is well merited. It is the outstanding gas-oil engine of recent times, providing the eager response of a petrol unit matched to outstanding economy and long life.

If anything can overcome British drivers' prejudices against diesels it is this French engine. The usual argument against buying a diesel - apart from smell and noise - is that you have to be a very high-mileage driver before it becomes an economic proposition. This is based on the higher purchase price of the diesel car.

But the Peugeot/Citroen unit costs only £300 more than the petrol equivalent. It is good for something in excess of 100,000 miles and that makes it much sought after as a used car. You can more than recover the initial £300 in its higher resale value, leaving the frugal consumption of diesel at 10p a gallon less than petrol as the icing on the cake.

On two occasions while testing a Peugeot 309 GRD I was approached by drivers of similar models eager to swap notes. One was allocated the diesel by his insurance against his wishes. He was "astonished" by its power and smoothness. The other was on his third privately purchased diesel. "I change them every two years and I have a waiting list eager to buy them," he said.



The Peugeot 309 GRD: "astonishing" power and smoothness. Prices start at £7,620 for the X1D three-door, rising to £8,895 for the five-door SRD. The mid-range 5-door GRD on test costs £8,390, plus an extra £340 on test costs £8,730 for central locking. None of the diesels has power steering as standard, although in my view it is essential with so much engine weight on the front wheels.

Vital statistics:

- Model: Peugeot 309 GRD. Price: £8,390. Engine: 1905cc diesel. Power: 64hp. Official consumption: urban 40.4mpg, 56mpg, 64.2mpg and 75mpg, 47.9mpg. Length: 13.3ft. Insurance: Group four.

SAAB AUTHORIZED DEALERS. Includes ads for Peugeot, Jaguar & Daimler, Saab, and other car dealers with contact details.

Lack of Justice. Includes various legal notices, court reports, and advertisements for insurance and legal services.

Soccer's popularity in the United States is a success story still to be covered by the American media

Texas Longhorns blazing the trail

On July 4 in Zurich the United States Soccer Federation makes its bid for the 1994 World Cup finals, despite a background of persistently failing professional football. Could FIFA justify awarding America the cup? David Miller reports from Dallas

The World Championship Tennis finals, initiated by the Texas billionaire, Lamar Hunt, in the early 1970s, struggles to get a full complement of eight players at the Reunio Arena this week for a \$680,000 (around £365,000) event worth \$200,000 to the winner. Withdrawals by Wilander and others plague the competition's reputation.

sounding unfortunately like Long John Silver in his reflections on the touchline upon the referee, could not rally his powder monkeys as the occasionally unscrupulous Portland boarding party won 2-0.

players in the North Texas State Soccer Association alone, and 1,600 referees, coming from 108 local associations.

Let me give you just four statistics: This summer, between June 1 and August 12, there will be more than 500 coaching "camps".

mention in detail the decision to be taken on July 4, for which the USSF has the corporate backing of the most famous multi-national names in America.

CCPR speaks out over funding

By John Goodbody

The Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) yesterday criticized the balance of the Government's sport expenditure, which is primarily split between supporting governing bodies and stimulating mass participation through regional projects.

England are warned as Soviet Union turn on the power

From Stuart Jones Football Correspondent West Berlin

Argentina 2 Soviet Union 4

A few dark omens for England were spread across the opening game of the West Berlin tournament here yesterday.

Although the huge stadium was almost empty and the contest was caught somewhere between a competitive fixture and an exhibition, there were unmistakable signs that the Soviet Union has lost little of the talent displayed in 1986.

The most recent signing of Dynamo Kiev and one of their representatives in the squad claims three goals in the notable 4-0 win over Greece earlier this month.

pierced instantly, Caungia, a fleet-footed but wild forward, disturbed them with an overhead kick and Trogiolo cleaned up with a precise drive.

From Clive White Madrid When you have played under Bill Shankly at Liverpool for as long as John Toshack did, finishing second best is hard to accept.



From one expatriate to another: Gary Lineker with the cup Toshack thought would be his

Hill will referee Cup final

From Stuart Jones Football Correspondent West Berlin

Hill started refereeing in 1965 and was made a Football League referee in 1975. He was appointed a FIFA referee in 1983.

Hill has also been booked for the Mercantile Credit Festival in the stadium on April 16 and 17, an occasion which will now double as a fitness test.

Valley supporters step up the fight

Disaffected Charlton supporters will take to the streets this weekend, collecting signatures for a petition which they hope will help them in the fight to persuade the club to return to their former home at the Valley.

The group, which calls itself the "Voice of the Valley", is asking to collect thousands of names in support of the move to the Blackwall tunnel.

offset the costs of having five fourth division games postponed this year because of a waterlogged pitch. The council argued that the pitch had not maintained the pitch properly.

Dave Stringer, the manager, said yesterday: "Every fit player will be considered." Player-coach David Williams, and transfer-listed defender Shaun Elliott and Kenny Brown, are likely additions to the squad.

Ballymena maintain momentum

By George Ace

Ballymena United, who meet Glanavon in an Irish Cup semi-final at the Oval next week, maintained their momentum with an impressive 2-0 away win at Seaview against Crusaders in a County Antrim Association centenary tournament first-round match on Wednesday.

It was a goal of stunning quality by Scott, approaching from a low angle, which set the tone for their way: he ghosted past four players and crashed the ball into the net with the hapless Brown looking on.

Forest scotch Clough talk

By Dennis Shaw

The attempt by Brian Clough on BBC Sportsnight to reopen his prospects of taking over as manager has been thwarted by Maurice Roworth, the Nottingham Forest chairman.

Asked if Forest would convene a meeting to discuss their manager's continued public interest in the post, he said: "We don't hold board meetings at Nottingham Forest to discuss decisions already decided. All this has begun again because of a chat on television. What does that mean?"

Mayfield saves the day

By a Special Correspondent

Minutes later, At Sion had a header cleared off the line. The Welsh kept up the pressure until the end and for the first time in 23 years the trophy returned to Wales.

Wales proved to be a worthy winner of the British Universities championship at Welford Road, Oxford, with a 1-0 victory over English Universities II.

Marshall faces an age crisis

By Dennis Shaw

Peter Marshall lost in the third round of the junior world championships in Edinburgh to Carl Carlton of Australia.

Marshall is a marvellous and interesting squash prospect. Hard of head and tough in sinew, he has dominated all the British age groups to this point.

Barnet take avoiding action

Non-League football by Paul Newman

The Easter programme, so often a watershed of the football season, is again likely to have a decisive influence on the race for the GM Vauxhall Conference championship and promotion to the fourth division.

Fisher, hoping for a club record league gate of more than 2,000, have shown improved form since losing 3-0 at Lincoln in January.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS

League	Match	Score
BARCLAYS LEAGUE	Nottingham Forest 2, Derby County 1	2-1
United States Soccer Federation	USA 1, Canada 1	1-1
FIFA WORLD CUP	Argentina 2, Soviet Union 4	2-4
VALLEY LEAGUE	Charlton Athletic 1, Crystal Palace 0	1-0
WELSH LEAGUE	Wales 1, England 0	1-0
ENGLISH LEAGUE	Wales 1, England 0	1-0
FRENCH CUP	Paris Saint-Germain 2, Lille 1	2-1
GERMAN CUP	Borussia Dortmund 2, Schalke 04 1	2-1
SPANISH CUP	Real Madrid 2, Athletic Bilbao 1	2-1
ITALIAN CUP	Inter Milan 1, Juventus 1	1-1

market before the conference deadline yesterday. Although he failed in attempts to sign two big-name forwards - Steve Butler, of Maidstone, and Carl Richards, of Bournemouth - he has signed Darren Williams (forward) on loan from Sutton for £2,000. Paul Wilson (midfielder) on a free transfer from Barling, and Francis Awaritefe (forward) from Sutton.

Elsewhere, senior opposition proved too much for FOSC, who were beaten 2-0 by Bangor. Maghera, who got on the wrong end of a hat-trick against Cliftonville, and Ballyclare Comrades, who went down 2-0 against Ards.

Wales proved to be a worthy winner of the British Universities championship at Welford Road, Oxford, with a 1-0 victory over English Universities II.

Marshall is a marvellous and interesting squash prospect. Hard of head and tough in sinew, he has dominated all the British age groups to this point.

Marshall is a marvellous and interesting squash prospect. Hard of head and tough in sinew, he has dominated all the British age groups to this point.

Woody White in an enclosure... Davies... O'Leary... FOR THE RE...

حكايات من الأصل

